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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 1 October 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. de MARCO (Malta)

later: Mr. THOMPSON (Fiji)
(Vice-President)

- Address by Mr. Guillermo Endara Galimany, President of the Republic of Panama
- Address by Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda
- Address by Mr. Alfredo Felix Cristiani-Burkard, President of the Republic of El Salvador
- Address by Mr. Carlos Andres Perez, President of the Republic of Venezuela
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana (Zaire)
Mr. Sani Bako (Niger)
Mr. Al-Khalifa (Bahrain)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. GUILLERMO ENDARA GALIMANY, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Panama.

Mr. Guillermo Endara Galimany, President of Panama, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Panama, His Excellency Mr. Guillermo Endara Galimany, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President ENDARA GALIMANY (interpretation from Spanish): Let me begin by saying we are very pleased at the election of Guido de Marco as President of the General Assembly. I must also recognize the efforts of the Secretary-General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, on behalf of peace and of the renewal of this Organization. Let me also express our satisfaction over the admission of Namibia and Liechtenstein to membership of this Organization this year.

For the first time in 22 years the people of Panama is legitimately and authentically represented in this world Organization.

From 1968 - when a leader newly elected by the people was the victim of a crude military coup d'état - until the end of last year, force of arms and the constant threat of its use dominated the Panamanian people and stole the government of my country. The concepts of justice, ethics, the common good, development and democracy during those years had the meaning that those usurpers wanted to give them. They did not have the true meaning reflected in the conscience of the people and in the values of the nation.

On 7 May last year, the citizens of Panama went to the polls en masse and in an orderly way, displaying an exemplary public spirit. Those elections were called by a military dictatorship that was worn out and repudiated and which thought to

(President Endara Galimany)

cling to power through trickery and coercion before and during that public referendum. The people expressed its will overwhelmingly against the dictatorial régime and in favour of democracy, freedom and hope.

From this rostrum and in the name of all Panamanians, I would like to thank all friendly peoples, all Governments, all international institutions and all those people of good will which, with their presence in our country, testified to the result of those elections in May and with their moral authority strengthened our spirit of struggle.

But when fraud, coercion and downright cheating were not enough to deflect the desire for change clearly shown in the electoral process, the tyranny turned to farce. In a blatant and shameful act, the Government annulled the elections. It told the people that the elections which it had itself called, organized and administered, were not valid. Then with a stroke of a pen, through a decree that lacked any legal or moral backing, they slapped down the highest moral and civic values of Panamanians.

The rest of the story is known: more persecutions and more exiles, murders, harassment and violations of human rights. How sad it was for the Panamanian people to find itself alone. The international community did not realize the vital importance our fight had for us, nor did it see it in its full dimension as a lamentable example for other peoples.

International diplomacy gave us a choice between accepting the conditions which the illegitimate government imposed in order to stay in power and having recourse to the human slaughter that would result from a civil war between a defenceless people and an army equipped with weapons. Only a few friendly countries really understood the full extent of the suffering of our people and its legitimate aspirations and supported us.

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(President Endara Galimany)

When force and arrogance gave way to madness, the final outcome was irreversible. With all the constitutional, legal and moral rights given us months before by the overwhelming popular mandate, we took power under the most chaotic of circumstances. There were no basic institutions to support a democratic government. There was no structure capable of assuring even the minimum public order required. There was no legislative branch, inasmuch as its orderly reorganization had been prevented.

(President Endara Galimany)

The Supreme Court of Justice was without a leader. The Government Treasury had been virtually looted, since public funds had been controlled and directly abused by military headquarters. Public employees were not paid in full or on time.

Payment of the public debt had been completely disregarded in the last three years, and consequently all sources of new credit had disappeared. Political instability in the last years, together with the economic sanctions imposed on the Panamanian Government by the United States Government in 1988, produced a sudden depression in the national economy, which suffered a fall of some 16 per cent of gross domestic product in that year alone. Public revenues were reduced by half. The unemployment rate went up to 18 per cent, a figure never before seen in our history.

Unemployment became the most serious problem we faced. The decrease, or absence, of income caused the basic needs of the population to remain generally unmet. Forty-five per cent of our people are considered poor; the vast majority of children live in poor homes. Poverty and unemployment most harshly affect young women from 15 to 24 years of age.

There is a great scarcity of housing, reflected in a growing shortage of accommodations and in dehumanizing overcrowding. The difficulty of financing the construction of housing for the poor has led to the proliferation of shanty towns.

A lack of investment in health and education, especially in recent years, has caused a deterioration of services for the poor. Malnutrition, a lack of drinking water and poor education are problems we inherited from the dictatorship and from the difficulties of recent years.

I must note with regret that social problems affect primarily children, youth, women, the indigenous population and senior citizens.

(President Endara Galimany)

Today I want to speak in the name of my people. I want to bring before the representatives of all the world's countries the voice of the Panamanian people, which suffers but which has hope; the voice of the peasant who works from morning to night under the hot sun or in the tropical rain to survive in his poverty; the voice of the worker, used to hard work, who searches for the decent job he has yet to find; the voice of the mother who puts her children to bed at night without any food in their stomachs; the voice of the child who sells newspapers, of the shoeshine boy, or of the child who stands on the street-corner selling anything to take a crust of bread back to his family, his childhood and his education cut off, forced to be an adult before his time; the voice of the ill without medicine and without the need to be ill; the voice of the poor man without a roof over his head, or a bed to sleep in, or shelter for the night.

Those are voices I want to make heard in this Hall, which houses the conscience of mankind. That is the flag I want to raise. That is the cry I wish to be heard in all corners of the world: There is suffering in the world, and we have to end it.

Fortunately, in Panama there is a fresh breeze filling us with hope and optimism. We are breathing the air of freedom in a climate of democracy. We Panamanians today control our future. Democratic institutions are working. Democracy must respond to the material and spiritual needs of the Panamanian people.

The three duly established branches of Government are working independent of one another, in an awareness that the concentration of power is a danger we must avoid by all means.

We have abolished the army because the Panamanian people does not want any more armies - much less the cost of one. Only a few days ago, in an unprecedented act in our history, the civil authorities proclaimed the retirement of 142 officials who had been a part of the former army.

(President Endara Galimany)

In that way we are demilitarizing the structures charged with the maintenance of public order. In Panama today there no generals or colonels. There are no lieutenant-colonels either.

There is full freedom of speech and total respect for human rights. The gaols house only common criminals. Only Panamanians who do so of their own free will live outside their homeland.

In the economic sphere, we are already feeling a resurgence of suppressed energies. Confidence on internal and extermal matters is growing. In the banking sector, restrictions that had existed for two years on certificates of deposit were lifted a few months ago with no adverse effect on the liquidity of the system. On the contrary, bank deposits grew in 1990.

The construction industry, which directly and indirectly generates many jobs, is being reactivated, as seen by the increase in the number of construction permits issued this year. Tourism in Panama and hotel occupancy are increasing daily. The volume of business of the Colon Free Zone has increased considerably. We shall soon have a new law permitting the establishment of industries in multisector zones for export. We have an aggressive policy to stimulate our exports.

We are arranging our public finances, putting things in order and facing - responsibly - the huge external debt we inherited. We are putting into effect a modest but efficient public investment programme that satisfies the most urgent needs of the community.

We want political democracy to be accompanied by economic democracy. All opportunities should be open to all citizens.

(President Endara Galimany)

We believe in economic growth, but also in human development. Our main concern is unemployment and the poor. We have a very large unemployed labour force - men and women, many of them heads of household, with a high level of education hoping to find decent jobs.

We have to meet enormous housing, health, nutrition and education needs, above all for the children, who own the future. We are fully aware that investment in our human capital is a priority if we are to achieve sustained economic development, to benefit all sectors of the population.

We must bring about a successful democracy that really meets the needs of the population. I know that in this task we can count on the help of the Governments of the developed countries of our continent, Europe and Asia and the goodwill of international organizations, in terms of financing and technical co-operation. This help and co-operation acquire a new meaning in the post-cold-war world, which we celebrate in 1990. I shall return to this subject later.

So far I have spoken of Panama's recent history and its present experiences, because they explain our firm position on many items on the international agenda and because we consider that the United Nations should be the sounding-board for the ideals and aspirations of the men and women of the world. I believe that our experience is shared, to a greater or lesser degree, by all the countries represented here.

First, because we have suffered at first hand, we have established by law the principle that we shall never recognize any Government originating from a military coup against a legitimate régime elected in popular elections or a Government holding power as a result of electoral fraud or its prevention of elections provided for by the domestic law of the State in question. We shall make no exceptions; we shall be inflexible. He who deceives and rejects the will of his people will find no encouragement or support from either my people or my Government.

(President Endara Galimany)

Secondly, we are concerned about the present situation of democracy throughout the world and especially in the countries of the American continent. We unreservedly support all measures conducive to a rapid solution of any electoral problem. We are pleased by the readiness of the Security Council and the Secretariat to find a viable solution to the case of Haiti, especially because Panama did not have the benefit of the same treatment when it needed it recently.

Thirdly, we support all actions that will contribute to ensuring political, civil and human rights, guaranteed by international conventions. We are committed under the San Jose Convention to respect the competence and decisions of the Central American Court of Justice, which we are sure will become the highest guarantor of the human rights of all the people of our continent. We also believe in the work of the bodies dealing with civil and political rights within the United Nations, which will receive the full and constant support of the Panamanian Government.

Fourthly, we shall use all the means available to us to fight the drug traffic and its financial instruments, because our country was one of the direct victims of the drug economy, as a result of the actions of the military Government. We have taken measures in our domestic legislation to combat the laundering of drug money, by requiring that all bank transactions exceeding a certain amount be registered. We are willing to co-operate in international efforts in this regard. We are signatories of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which should soon be submitted to our legislative branch for study and ratification.

Fifthly, we agree on the need to supervise the production of arms world wide and the trade in arms for terrorist and anti-democratic purposes. We, who played a part in the arms trade under the military government, are drawing up measures to

(President Endara Galimany)

prevent the illegal movement of arms and military matériel. We must stop this deadly trade, as the Federal Republic of Germany recently suggested here.

Sixthly, we believe that this Organization and all the bodies linked to it should continue their work on priority matters of universal concern, such as the freedom of the individual, the eradication of poverty and human development with participation, to give a human perspective to economic growth. Action taken by the United Nations, together with parallel action at the national level by leaders truly committed to the achievement of their peoples' well-being, will lead us, in what remains of this century, to make up for lost time.

We should welcome the twenty-first century in a more constructive environment, in which people are less anguished and less anxious and are more satisfied with what they can achieve by their own efforts and with God's help. I should like the General Assembly soon to declare a Decade on Poverty, dedicated to concentrating our efforts to stop the increase in poverty, illness and illiteracy in our world and to reduce them to a minimum.

We are taking part in this forty-fifth session of the General Assembly in a year of extraordinary transformations, which have brought about a rebirth of the United Nations as an organization with renewed functions and tasks. At the end of the cold war this Organization in emerging into a world in which peace and international co-operation are truly feasible. Free of the tensions between the super-Powers, the United Nations can now devote itself fully to promoting social peace, human development and respect for human rights. The road is open for enhanced action leading to positive results.

(President Endara Galimany)

In this post-cold-war environment the time is right for ending one of the last legacies of that past era: the exclusion of the Republic of Korea from this Organization. The Republic of Korea is willing to contribute, as an active member, to promoting world peace and international co-operation, and it should not be excluded for a moment longer.

(President Endara Galimany)

Its full participation will represent an important commitment to facilitating the process of reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula in accordance with the principles and objectives of the Charter. Panama confidently supports the incorporation of the Republic of Korea into the Organization as soon as possible.

We also support implementation of Security Council resolutions aimed at solving the question of Cyprus in order to eliminate the last vestiges of the cold war.

In the post-cold-war environment there is a sombre black cloud. We are meeting at a time of grave crisis in the Middle East. The future of a nation and the lives of thousands of innocent people hang by a thread.

I wish to take this opportunity to express the unconditional support of my Government for the commendable actions taken by the Security Council in defence of Kuwait's sovereignty and independence. The level of co-operation it has achieved, its serious deliberations and the worth of its decisions have raised the authority of the United Nations to unprecedented levels. It has won universal respect. The cruel invasion of its neighbour by Iraq has reminded us how fragile peace is in our world. This crude aggression has not only provoked our condemnation, but has shown, as never before, the interdependence of the nations of the world. We have recognized that the loss of freedom, no matter how small the country where it occurs, can jeopardize social peace and prosperity even in larger countries. The Government of Panama has faithfully complied with measures adopted by the Security Council to put an end to the Gulf crisis. It also firmly supports the actions taken thus far under United Nations authority and is willing to support any additional measures it may authorize.

I wish to note that Panama has made much progress in the last few months and will continue to do so. Panamanians want to see Panama sovereign over all its

(President Endara Galimany)

territory - in undisputed possession of all its resources, developing them all for its own benefit primarily, but also for the benefit of the world. I reaffirm my Government's complete respect for the 1977 Canal Treaties and my country's international obligations.

I wish to see Panama respected by all nations, and we will achieve this because Panama respects itself, and the Government respects its people. We participate, without fear or complexes, in all our international relations because we are confident and aware of our own worth.

I am especially pleased to announce a historic fact: at the head of the administration of the inter-oceanic waterway there is, for the first time in history, a Panamanian citizen designated by my Government. Observance of the corresponding provisions of the Canal Treaty shows the intention of the Government of the United States of America to fulfil all its obligations and commitments under the 1977 Treaties. We view this willingness on the part of the United States with optimism, even though the problems which we must still discuss with the United States are many.

The reference to our inter-oceanic waterway leads me to define our concept of the Panama Canal in the twenty-first century. It is a Panamanian canal, and it will be managed by Panamanians, but based on the multilateral interests of all its users. We will take into account the needs of the world and, most especially, the needs of the friendly countries of the hemisphere. For this reason, the Government of Panama will periodically consult with the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean so that Canal policies will take into account the interests of all.

I wish to have good relations with all countries. I wish to have even better relations with those countries which share similar interests. Panama will prosper

(President Endara Galimany)

and will enjoy peace because its people is hardworking and because Panamanians share in the ideals of democracy, justice and freedom and always seek the truth.

May God always enlighten all Panamanians so that we do not deviate from this path. May God enlighten the Governments of the world so that they share the aspirations, ideals and hopes of the Panamanian people and its Government.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Panama for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Endara Galimany, President of the Republic of Panama, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Uganda.

Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President MUSEVENI: In 1987, I had the privilege of addressing this Assembly at its forty-second session and I took the opportunity at that time to apprise members of this body of our struggles in Uganda.

This time I have come wearing two hats, so to speak. Today, I speak on behalf of the States members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), as its current Chairman, for which I feel greatly honoured, and also as President of my country, Uganda.

(President Museveni)

We in Africa enter this decade with a deep sense of history. We vividly remember that the nineteenth century was characterized by the climax of the partition and colonization of our continent. Despite our problems, which I shall address presently, the twentieth century is closing just as Africa has recovered its political freedom. We brace ourselves as we look forward to making the twenty-first century one of memorable progress, when Africa becomes a continent of modern States. This calls for the confronting of all the problems of under-development - a task that is surely a global responsibility, a responsibility of all the countries in the United Nations.

Today, I should like to focus on the strategies for the economic and political emancipation of our continent and on the role that the international community can play in resolving these problems. In this regard, I see five fundamental obstacles to Africa's economic and political advancement: first, human-resource under-development, particularly under-development in science and technical training; secondly, the excessive and unbearable debt burden of the world's poorest nations; thirdly, rigidity and distortions in Africa's external trade, especially with the industrial countries; fourthly, rigidity and distortions in the influence of fiscal and monetary policy, especially in relation to multilateral financial institutions; fifthly, rigidity and corruption in the political and economic institutions of African States.

On the question of the under-development of human resources, it is important to note that the role of scientific discovery, invention and innovation in economic development has been fully recognized in recent economic history. Few would dispute the catalytic role of the steam engine, the aeroplane, the telephone and, more recently, the computer, in advancing the economic and social welfare of vast communities world-wide. Less well recognized, however, are the infrastructures that make these inventions possible. There is no doubt that active and sustained

(President Museveni)

participation in scientific and technical work requires a well organized and adequately funded educational establishment. Technology cannot be meaningfully advanced by, or transferred to, people who can neither read nor write.

Fundamentally, Africa recognizes that economic production is conceived, planned and implemented by people acting in their capacities as farmers, processors, traders, engineers and managers. While the various roles that individuals play in a production process require varying levels of literacy and technical training, there is no doubt that improvements in production require improvements in the knowledge and skills of human beings. Attempts to increase the utilization of tractors, for example, will not succeed where a country lacks trained mechanics to maintain them. Thus, expensive machines lie idle because skilled manpower is lacking.

Similarly, technology transfers from industrial countries to developing countries necessitate the poorer countries' maintaining a progressive and sustained educational effort so that the population may acquire the capacity to receive, absorb and improve upon the technologies. This is an essential component of the development process in African countries and in other nations of the world. Such training inevitably necessitates the commitment of real resources in the immediate term. There is no doubt whatsoever that Africa's fundamental development predicament today is the desperate lack of real resources to support the level of educational effort that is needed if the continent is to reach the development threshold.

The most fundamental change in the economies of Europe - the industrial revolution - was essentially a revolution of the middle class, the bourgeoisie. It was a self-sustaining process of economic growth whereby each succeeding generation expected to enjoy, and did enjoy, higher levels of production and consumption. No genuine, indigenous middle class - no captains of industry, as they were called in

(President Museveni)

another continent and in another century - has emerged in Africa. Instead, we behold the spectacle of a class of middlemen who act as commission agents for foreign manufacturers. These are the people we call Africa's middle class.

No economy will transform itself without the emergence of an indigenous class of industrialists and entrepreneurs. The cause of development will be best served by the deliberate encouragement, from within and from without, of the emergence of an African force to equal the industrial middle class, such as the one that accomplished the transformation of the economies of Western Europe and the rest of the developed northern hemisphere.

There is no doubt in my mind that if Africa is to develop, it must devote a greater share of its current income to the education of its people. Africa should also solicit and welcome substantial concessionary loans and grants to aid the education sector. Above all, what Africa must not do - can no longer afford to do - is continue to substitute debt servicing for education. In Uganda, for example, the proportion of the Government's recurrent budget that will go to debt servicing this year is more than twice that which is earmarked for education. This debt servicing, moreover, will use up more than 80 per cent of our foreign-exchange earnings. By any standard, such a burden on an economy whose disintegration over the past 30 years is well known illustrates that the international arrangements that have so far been devised to assist the world's poor nations to reach levels of self-sustained development continue to be grossly inadequate.

We believe that the objective of self-sustaining growth and development should not be sacrificed at the altar of debt servicing. We appeal to all members of this Organization to give their full support to debt-forgiveness and debt-rescheduling proposals, to ensure that the necessary resources are available to educate Africa's

(President Museveni)

populations so that they may be enabled to attain higher productive capacity. I understand, from current data, that there are 26 severely indebted low-income countries, of which 24 are in sub-Saharan Africa. I am further informed that in 1988 the debts of these low-income countries amounted to 135 per cent of their gross national product. It is evident that they cannot pay such debts. At best, they will service them by undermining their own economies, thus becoming less capable, in each successive year, of repaying debts. It is clearly in the interests of both debtors and creditors to reverse such an absurd and dangerous situation.

In the light of these problems, I commend the initiatives that have been advanced for the writing-off of debts. I must point out, however, that, so far, the actual relief resulting from these programmes is extremely small.

(President Museveni)

For example, until recently the cash-flow savings for 12 sub-Saharan countries in the special programme of assistance in 1989 were about $50 million, or 2 per cent of their debt-service burden. However, the recent announcement by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer in Trinidad is most welcome. It is evident that a great deal more must be done to break the grip of debt on Africa's economic progress.

I turn now to the subject of international trade.

For Africa, as for all the world, free and fair trade is vital to economic progress. It is well known that our countries have suffered greatly from deteriorating terms of trade as well as from protectionism in the developed countries. The values of coffee and cocoa have plummetted to unprecedented levels, causing many African countries to totter on the brink of chaos, which can be avoided only by abdicating independence to external institutions and donor countries. Our protests against imperfect and distorted markets which consistently raise the prices of the products of industrial countries while invariably reducing the value of our products, manufactured as well as primary, have fallen on deaf ears. We are now at a point where the value of our products has deteriorated to a fraction of what it was a few years ago, and tariff barriers on our processed products make it extremely difficult for us to penetrate the markets of the industrialized countries.

It is clear that the industrialized countries need to pay more than lip service to the doctrines of market economics. The advocacy of the market economy so generously proferred by the media and vigourously reinforced by the multilateral institutions would be more easily accepted if the international markets for our products were actually free and fair. It is incredibly insensitive to insist that we should obey the laws of the market when the only sure result so far is that

(President Museveni)

those markets have consistently devalued our products. We therefore urge this Organization to inquire yet more actively into the conduct of world markets and to reduce the rigidities and distortions which operate against developing countries' products. It is not at all inconceivable that the illegal practices which have recently been found in some stock exchanges and commodity markets may be more widespread than is generally believed.

I do not wish to blame the international situation for all of Africa's problems. I do recognize that there has also been a failure of policy in African countries. Overvalued exchange rates, large fiscal deficits, hyperinflation and negative interest rates have often led to instability and deterioration in many African economies. While we acknowledge these problems, we also wish to urge the multilateral institutions to recognize Africa's need for long-term structural change as opposed to lop-sided, rigid emphasis on short-term stabilization. Recent pronouncements from the World Bank indicate that they are beginning to orient future lending towards long-term development. We welcome this shift, and urge both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to complement each other's policies in order to promote genuine structural change in the African economies.

I wish to take this opportunity to clarify and reiterate our stand on political freedom. As the twentieth century draws to a close, Africans look back on it as the century in which most African countries regained political freedom from the colonial masters. For many of our countries - for example, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe - the wounds are still raw. As for South Africa, we are living through a continuous wake for the victims of apartheid.

Therefore, Africans know what freedom means. There have been various aborted democratic processes. This is because management of the democratic process itself was new to the continent. What previous experience did Africans have of managing a

(President Museveni)

democratic process? It was during precisely those centuries in which Europe and North America were emerging from feudalism towards - for some of them at least - liberal democracy that Africa was being ravaged by the slave trade and, later on, lost its sovereignty altogether. Because of colonial rule and the plunder of Africa in the preceding period, social forces which could sustain democracy had not emerged by the time of independence. In Europe, liberal democracy was and is the ideology of the industrial middle class and of the small, independent artisans before them. Where was the industrial middle class of Africa 30 years ago, during the twilight of colonialism? Despite these impediments, the democratic movement in Africa is on the forward march. An authentic democratic movement is being consolidated by internal, social dynamics. External sermonizing and pressure will not bring democracy to Africa.

In this regard, however, we take exception to the view that the mode of democracy practised in a select group of countries is the only legitimate democracy. We find considerable danger and paradox in the attempt to prescribe, in a virtually dictatorial, intolerant fashion, a brand of democracy which is ready-made and presumed to be the only correct one. I wish to urge the people of the world to agree that the cause of democracy would be better served by accepting pluralism, not only within the borders of a given State but also throughout the world. In this way, international democracy will emerge as an acceptance of multiple approaches to political freedom by the various peoples of the world. If the fundamental basis of democracy is the tolerance of alternative views within a given country, then the logical extension of this concept to the international level is the tolerance of alternative perceptions of democratic freedom by different cultures.

(President Museveni)

The acceptance of cultural variety is, in our view, not inconsistent with the yearning for universal human freedom, nor is it an escape mechanism by which tyrants can impose dictatorships on their peoples. It is simply a recognition of the fundamental forces at work in different parts of the world at different times. Nevertheless, the principles that form the essence of democracy are not negotiable. These are: accountability to the population; regular elections; a free press; universal suffrage; and unrestricted entry into the political process by those seeking election to leadership roles. These form the essence of democracy; the forms, however, may differ, and this is legitimate.

Africa is faced with a special challenge in the remainder of this century. That challenge is the conquest of economic underdevelopment and the emancipation of all African peoples from political servitude. In my remarks to the Assembly today, I have touched on some of the major obstacles to the attainment of these objectives. We believe that this Organization has a role to play in their realization.

Let me therefore take this opportunity to reaffirm our support for the United Nations, and our confidence in the capacity and willingness of the world community to assist Africa's quest for economic and political freedom. In this connection, I would recall the special session of the General Assembly on 1 June 1986; at which the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 was unanimously adopted.

(President Museveni)

That historic session witnessed the forging of a unique compact and coalition between Africa and the international community to accelerate socio-economic recovery and development in Africa. Unfortunately, that global coalition has not been sustained as the crisis in Africa, rather than abating, has become worse. A final review of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 will be conducted at the forty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. Searching questions must be asked and an in-depth assessment must be conducted at that session on the fate of the 1986 consensus, the impact it has had on bringing about economic recovery and development, and the extent to which all parties to this historic alliance have honoured the commitments contained in the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

Based on that final review and evaluation the General Assembly will also need to pronounce itself on the measures that need to be undertaken to support a process of sustained growth and transformation in Africa in the post-Programme period.

It is therefore imperative that the final review of the implementation of the United Nations Programme and support for African development and transformation endeavours in the 1990s should be conducted. The Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has recommended that mechanisms for the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme should be similar to those of the mid-term review of the Programme, and that for this purpose an ad hoc committee of the whole of the General Assembly should be established to appraise the Programme and to propose measures for sustained development in Africa beyond 1991. The Organization of African Unity endorses this recommendation and hopes that the necessary resources will be made available to the ECA to carry out the

(President Museveni)

review exercise. The current session of the General Assembly has been entrusted with the task of establishing the mechanism for the final review of the Programme. It is my sincere hope that the Assembly will concur in the proposals that have been put to it by Africa.

In conclusion, first, I request that, a special effort be mounted by the world community, through this Organization, to increase resources for investment in education in Africa. That is one of the surest ways to lay the foundation for the scientific and technical revolution which Africa must now accomplish in order to bring about self-sustaining development.

Secondly, I call upon Africa's creditors, including the multilateral institutions, to adopt realistic attitudes that are effectively compatible with Africa's long-term development and growth.

Thirdly, I must make a special appeal to all Members of this Organization to re-examine the conduct of international trade, so that it is free and fair to all participating countries. The time is long overdue for reversing the decline in the terms of trade of the developing countries.

Fourthly, I urge the multilateral institutions to adopt more flexible macro-economic policies which recognize the limits of current economic knowledge and which emphasize long-term development and not merely short-term stabilization.

Fifthly, I reiterate that the Organization of African Unity fully accepts the objectives of popular democracy. Our Organization will continue to encourage its members to create an environment for freedom and democracy in every African country. We recognize that there are too many - and in some cases protracted - internecine struggles in Africa today. Liberia is a recent and very tragic example. These conflicts are also, more often than not, funded by outside interests. Our continent cannot prosper if these struggles continue. We appeal to

(President Museveni)

the international community to support peace and to eschew destabilization in Africa. A peaceful Africa will ultimately serve and enhance the cause of global peace.

In this regard I must emphasize the obligation of all member countries to intensify pressure upon the apartheid régime in South Africa to hasten the end of that affront to humanity. The sanctions against South Africa are being felt by the racist régime. They should therefore be tightened in order to force South Africa to abandon apartheid at once. The Africans in South Africa itself have expressed support for sanctions as a means of forcing the racists to abandon apartheid. It is therefore incorrect to maintain the view that sanctions are wrong because presumably they hurt the black majority. The view of the black majority is that they want the sanctions. If we are truly interested in assisting them we should respect their views on this important matter. Those who doubt the efficacy of sanctions must now reassess their positions in the light of the current position elsewhere in the world. If sanctions can work in Iraq they can work in South Africa.

Finally, I should like to call on the United Nations system to implement the United Nations resolutions on the Middle East and the Gulf. We cannot talk about freedom in the rest of the world and forget the people of Kuwait and the people of Palestine.

We reaffirm the right of all countries to determine, in all sovereignty, their system of democracy on the basis of their socio-cultural values, taking into account the realities of our countries, the necessity to ensure development and to satisfy the basic needs of our peoples. We therefore assert that democracy and development should go together and should be mutually reinforcing.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Uganda for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. ALFREDO FELIX CRISTIANI-BURKARD, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of El Salvador.

Mr. Alfredo Félix Cristiani-Burkard, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of El Salvador, His Excellency Mr. Alfredo Félix Cristiani-Burkard, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President CRISTIANI-BURKARD (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to begin my address to the Assembly, Sir, by saying how pleased I am at your election to preside, with your usual skill and wisdom, over the difficult work of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the highest forum at which the world's problems are discussed. In congratulating you, we also wish to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Mr. Joseph Nanven Garba, for his work during the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly; this makes it clear that the Organization - to which we are so proud to belong and to which we feel such a sense of commitment - is continuing its consistent efforts to the benefit of the higher interests of the international community.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

We also wish to make special mention of the significant and important role played by the Secretary-General at this crucial time in history when, more than ever before, the function of diplomatic understanding requires the contribution of experienced men of vision. In particular, as far as El Salvador is concerned, we wish to express our sincere and profound gratitude to the Secretary-General for his efforts and those of his personal representative, Dr. Alvaro de Soto, to find a political solution to the Salvadoran conflict, which for over a decade has inflicted tremendous suffering on the people of my country.

This is the second time I have spoken from this rostrum from which the representatives of all the peoples of the world make their voices heard. I must candidly say that I have been greatly struck by the extraordinary magnitude and pace of the changes that have occurred in the world in the last year. The transformation now occurring in the consciousness of humanity is so significant and so far reaching in its implications that I would even go so far as to say that it is an unprecedented development in the history of the last few centuries. I wish to emphasize that it is a phenomenon of consciousness that is in question, because it seems beyond any doubt that what we are seeing is not merely a change of ideologies but the emergence of a much more dynamic and broader conception of liberty in the political, economic and cultural spheres.

After a traumatic century in which virtually the entire intelligentsia of the world allowed itself to be seduced by the mirage of radicalism, sacrificing freedom on the altar of equality, the totalitarian utopia has collapsed, leaving it quite evident that no equality and no progress have been achieved and showing that freedom, despite all the chains, is a fundamental and invariable force. The most exemplary and beautiful phenomenon we have noted in recent months is that freedom eventually prevails over any ideology that tries to adulterate or destroy it, and the individual will survives even the most sophisticated collectivist aberrations.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

That is true not only for the industrialized world, but also for the developing world. Freedom is not the exclusive privilege of anyone, nor is democracy anyone's exclusive partimony. All humans have the right and ability to be free. All peoples have the capacity to live and to develop in democracy. In the new era of human history that we are now entering, there is no longer any room for paralysing authoritarianism or destructive totalitarianism. The change that is taking place in history belongs to all of us and commits all of us.

Fortunately, the simplistic catch-phrases of ideology have lost all their spurious magic. What is now prevailing is a healthy pragmatism that will make it possible to restructure the systems of ideas in a healthier way more in keeping with the dynamism of the creative spirit of humanity. The dreadful wars and bloody revolutions have taught us a lesson that is as old as history itself but more valid and more vigorous than ever: violence and hatred cause only destruction, because they are the greatest enemies of life.

As those responsible for the conduct of the affairs of our nations, we are meeting here precisely to work for life. The renewed interest in the protection of children is evidence of that. The widespread determination to save and protect the natural environment is also evidence of it. The universal repudiation of all forms of war and aggression testify to that end. The powerful re-emergence of the methods of peace to confront even the most difficult problems of our age demonstrates that point in a practically unanimous manner.

The unanimity of the civilized world in response to the crisis in the Persian Gulf is the best sign that the world requirement of security for peace is being strengthened much more rapidly than the most optimistic forecasts could have estimated. It is vitally important that we should avoid war through all diplomatic and political means available. The international machinery is being put to the test and our Organization now has a very crucial challenge facing it. If the

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

civilized methods prove able to resolve the crisis brought about by the repugnant and offensive act of aggression against the sovereign State of Kuwait, the international order will have emerged unscathed from the supreme ordeal. If not, it will be more than ever evident that a new international security order is required, and that all international machinery needs to be revised. Our Government resolutely supports the resolutions of the Security Council relating to the crisis and fervently appeals for the effective implementation without delay of those and any other resolutions that may be necessary to resolve a crisis that so seriously jeopardizes world peace and development.

In this phase of contemporary history, so terrible and yet so promising, Central America has gradually emerged as a concrete reality in the eyes of the international community. One can safely say that before the 1980s Central America was practically an unknown area from which only sporadic news emerged and always with an exotic overtone. In the middle of a world that is rapidly being modernized, Central America seemed doomed to irretrievable historical ostracism such that it was not considered worthy of involvement in the future of civilization. The profound political crisis of the traditional institutions, together with the major effort made by totalitarianism to seize the region - which was strategically so important in the patterns of the cold war - caused Central America to make a leap into the void. It found itself propelled from endemic anonymity to the forefront of the agenda of the world Powers and onto the headlines of the world press.

The last great confrontation of the cold war occurred in Central America. Central America was the last act of the drama on which we now see the final curtain coming down. And that, a result of painful conflict whose effects we are trying to overcome at the national and regional levels, has also given us an international

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

dimension that we must now put to good use in order to establish the peace and consolidate our democratic processes.

Contrary to all adversity and expectations, democracy is now a functioning reality in all the countries of Central America. But we cannot and must not lose sight of the fact that nascent democracies are fragile and depend to a considerable extent on international understanding and support. From this rostrum, I reiterate our request to the international community for resolute, concrete and substantial support for the Central American democracies and for Salvadoran democracy in particular.

We also realize that our democracies cannot request support without at the same time earning the world's credibility. Two factors are essential in that regard. We must show that we Central Americans are actually engaged in a serious process of integration amongst ourselves for peace and development. We must also show in tangible terms that each of our societies is working courageously for democratic institutional reform and the full guarantee of human rights.

We also reiterate a cordial and respectful plea to our friends, the Presidents of Central America, including Panama, for us to rise even more resolutely and energetically in the near future to meet the challenge of integration, not just economic but also social and political integration.

It is not my intention to repeat the advocacy of union, as was characteristic of the past. Rather, I seek to form the outlines as soon as possible of a Central America of nationalities, which will make it possible to preserve our individual characteristics and at the same time come to terms with the reality of a world that does not forgive isolation or acknowledge self-sufficiency.

If great blocks of nations can unite in a new type of nationality whose prime component is a common destiny, it would be absurd for us Central Americans to fail

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

to find suitable formulas to confront in a united way the challenge of modernity, which is increasingly complex and competitive. The world already tends to see Central America as a bloc, and Central America cannot shirk that vision of itself from the outside without running the severe risk of retaining a marginal status in history.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

Our priority task is to achieve general peace in Central America, which will make possible permanent democratic stability. In reference to peace, the case of El Salvador comes to mind first and foremost.

Speaking about El Salvador from this rostrum of the United Nations provides an extraordinary opportunity, as always, and allows us to reiterate with truth and sincerity our commitment to what we Salvadorians are doing to change our society in order to make it more prosperous and more united in the immediate future. In that regard, peace is now the top priority for our Government, in accordance with the most profound and urgent aspiration of the national community and with the expressed sentiments of the international community.

I take this opportunity to refer to peace in El Salvador as something quite concrete and feasible, which is important to all of us and incumbent upon all of us. We must exclude no one from this peace effort unless we are to commit the same error as in the past, that is, leaving certain sectors out of the construction of our national destiny or in a marginal status.

As I have insistently stated since assuming the presidency, I regard myself as the legitimate representative and servant of the interests of all Salvadorians, even those who do not share my pattern of values and my views concerning the country. We Salvadorians are learning - and our apprenticeship is difficult and arduous, but necessary - that in order to deserve to live in peace we must work seriously for tolerance and mutual respect, beyond ideologies and sectoral interests. Our country is historically moving in that direction, as are our daily efforts. In this respect, we attach great importance to the role of the political parties, regardless of ideology, and I am proud to inform the international community that there is now in El Salvador inter-party machinery which has come

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

about in the climate of negotiations now prevailing in the country and in which all the political parties, of various schools of thought, are working together.

This inter-party effort, which has never been so broad or self-sustained in the history of our country, has already borne its first fruit: a consensus agreement to carry out reforms and take the necessary measures to guarantee that the legislative and municipal elections of next March will be to the fullest extent possible secure and clean and have massive voter participation, so that no one can objectively call them in question.

For this purpose, the inter-party commission has agreed to international monitoring of the electoral process from its initial stages. My Government, with its firm commitment to endorsing the consensus agreements resulting from the elections, expresses before this universal forum its determination to ensure that the international monitoring of the forthcoming elections will begin functioning immediately, with sufficient scope and freedom to leave no doubt in anyone's mind of our will to achieve democracy.

In the light of the foregoing, we invite the Organization and its Member States to give us their full co-operation and to set in motion immediately, in a consistent and effective manner, the machinery for international monitoring of the forthcoming electoral process. In our country clean and honest elections are an important part of the democratization that has been under way since 1982.

Peace in El Salvador is not going to come out of the barrel of a gun. Peace has to be gradually forged in the political understanding of the various forces involved. As part of that national understanding, the negotiations between the Government of the Republic and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Force (FMLN)

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

are a crucial factor, and they must be promoted and conducted in a reasonable manner so that they may yield permanent results for the benefit of all our people.

Throughout the year that has elapsed since I had the honour of speaking from this rostrum, we have made constant efforts on behalf of political negotiations with a view to ending the conflict. I do not wish to dwell on the regrettable fact that the FMLN broke off negotiations in November last year and launched a very violent offensive which struck unjustly at the civilian population, already severely battered by war. We have come here not to complain about what has happened in the past but rather to explain the positive things that are going on.

At the beginning of this year we came to the United Nations to request its assistance in restoring the negotiating process. This came about in April, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who has at all times been eager to bring all his wisdom and energy to bear in the service of the cause of peace in El Salvador. Through his worthy representative, Mr. De Soto, we have succeeded in re-establishing the negotiating process, and this is now moving forward at such a pace that concrete results are already being achieved. Last July a substantive agreement was signed between the Government and the FMLN on the crucial aspect of respect for and guaranteeing of human rights in the country. As a consequence of that the Security Council has authorized the Secretariat to establish in El Salvador an office to do the preparatory work dealing with the verification of the agreements in all spheres that the process will produce.

I wish to emphasize that our Government places the highest possible value on the verification to be carried out by the United Nations in every aspect of the agreements resulting from the peace process. We are firmly committed to ensuring that this verification will be timely, broad and sufficient, without short-cuts or ambiguities.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

The first guarantee for peace in El Salvador is, of course, the determination of the people to achieve peace, as indicated by the serious and constant functioning of the peace machinery, both at the negotiating table and away from that table. The other guarantee is international verification, for the effectiveness of which we are prepared to give our full support and the assurances required, now and in the future. The verification model we have supported and agreed upon in order to end this conflict once and for all is unprecedented, and this in itself is a way of demonstrating to the world our determination to achieve harmony and our absolute sincerity with regard to the free and peaceful future of the country.

Our view of peace in El Salvador comprises three fundamental elements: the strengthening of unrestricted political pluralism, in the terms guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic; the consolidation of democratic institutions, with the unequivocal pre-eminence of the civilian branch of authority, deriving from the will of the people; and sustained and balanced economic and social development which will make it possible for El Salvador to build a model of prosperity in which everyone will have an opportunity for advancement.

We are opposed to the paternalism which causes peoples to become stultified and the populism which impoverishes them by deceiving them, and also to simplistic economic formulas which fail to take into account the human dimension of development. We believe primarily in the creative productive spirit of the human being and his inherent freedom, and that is why we have designed and put into effect a pattern of measures which, while gradually improving the economy, will make possible the realistic and accelerated reconstruction of the country. This obviously has a high political cost, but we are prepared to confront that, because

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

we are guided by the interests of our nation. We also know that this way of thinking and this type of economic action now prevail in the world, and this encourages us to move ahead without vacillation, although we are prepared to make corrections and changes as necessary when the objective reality of our country so requires.

We are aware that in El Salvador a radical change is taking place, the outcome of the most profound crisis in our history. National salvation, which is the ultimate goal of my Government, involves the purification of practically all our institutions, and of course the armed forces are no exception.

In all honesty we can say that the civilian branch of authority is becoming stronger and stronger in our country and that, within the present process of institutional modernization, each sector is taking its place within the orderly framework of a functional democracy.

Those who want to see El Salvador as it was in 1979 want to live in the past, because they are either biased or blind. The decade of the 1980s has taught us in El Salvador more than we could have learnt in all the previous decades since independence. In the first place it has taught us the irreplaceable value of democracy, which is the best school of moderation. In democracy only the moderate prosper, and the best proof of moderation is strict compliance with the laws. That is why our struggle is one on behalf of rationality and understanding and the peaceful coexistence of brothers - because we have already seen for ourselves the madness of war, and we do not want even the slightest root of that fratricidal madness to remain in our soil.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

Our Government is a full-fledged member of the civilized community of nations and, in this respect, we assume the international responsibilities incumbent upon us. El Salvador is at this time making legitimate use of this status by having recourse to the the International Court of Justice together with our sister Republic of Honduras in order to seek a settlement to a century-old frontier dispute, which we hope will be terminated once and for all in mid-1991. Our country, as we have undertaken to do, and as indeed is our obligation, by virtue of our voluntary acceptance of the jurisdiction of the Court, will comply with the Court's ruling on this frontier dispute. Moreover, El Salvador is fully confident that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, through the Security Council, and at the request of the Presidents of Central America, particularly the President of El Salvador, will continue to pursue his active mediation to resolve, by political negotiations, the internal conflict still affecting our people.

We uphold international law absolutely and unequivocally. Our confidence in international machinery to foster the peaceful settlement of all kinds of conflicts is total. As regards the domestic conflict which is afflicting us, and which we feel now is completely out of date and totally unwarranted, our position is quite clear. We want a comprehensive solution to this conflict. We hope that the FMNL, having become a totally political force, will participate with all the guarantees which all political parties have in the democratic life of the country, and we trust that the solution to be found to the conflict will serve, as Mr. Perez de Cuellar rightly observes in his annual report to the Organization, to lead "to a positive transformation of Salvadorian society". (A/45/1, p. 6)

We look towards the past only to learn positive lessons from it, not to try to reproduce it in any way, shape or form. The responsibility of Salvadorians for this decisive phase of our history is so great that we do not believe in the simplicity of superficial solutions. All our programmes and goals look forward

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

towards the immediate future and the more remote future. It would be suicidal to cling to vices, shortcomings and arbitrary behaviour or archaic privileges. Life is evolving, and minds must evolve also so that actions will respond to deeds and not to ideological mirages of any sort.

We want to live in peace. We are working to ensure that a firm and lasting peace will take root, in which there will be no type of oppression, no type of impunity and no type of exclusive fanaticism. Democracy is our ideal, and we dedicate our full energy every day to strengthening it. Democracy is built each day more with simple facts than with spectacular posturing. In that simple, natural and democratic way, we exercise power. We also nurture power in that way, because it is not our power and not anyone else's. It is the power of the people. This may seem mere talk but, in fact, it really represents our maximum challenge and, eventually, it will be our greatest conquest: affirming civil authority, not as an arbitrary type of rule, but as the authority leading the destiny of a pluralistic society, which we already are and which we shall increasingly be, in a peaceful manner.

There is no longer any reason for war to exist in El Salvador. We do not want war in El Salvador. Interpreting the mood of the people, from this rostrum, which is the highest rostrum of the nations, we would say to all the national forces: the Government of the Republic El Salvador is prepared to do its utmost, with flexibility and serenity as necessary, in order to continue to seek an exemplary peace such as the Salvadorian people deserves. In this respect, we have only two unswerving principles to uphold: the fundamental principles of representative democracy and respect for law. As regards respect for the law, we realize that it may change, of course, in accordance with the needs of the time, but change must be carried out on the rails established by the law itself. Political and social

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

reason can motivate such change, but it can never be motivated by arbitrary wishes or the caprice of individuals or groups.

Particularly, we address the FMNL and urge it to make a mutual exercise of flexibility and realistic understanding at the negotiating table. We have repeatedly said that the mere fact that we have proposed, from the first days of our term in Government, a permanent dialogue to seek a lasting peace in our country already moves us away from the fruitless and sterile, quarrelsome notion of victors and vanquished. Rather, we believe that this war has left us all with great lessons which we should learn so that we can put into practice these lessons to secure the peace which we want and which the country needs.

No one is trying to destroy anyone else, neither at the negotiating table, nor away from the negotiating table, nor after the negotiating table. Far from it. The greatest responsibility we have is to lower the level of individual and collective passions and to make a supreme effort of tolerance. Political and moral reasons provide abundant support for this attitude.

In accordance with the trend in today's world, and interpreting the mood of the international community, which has been set forth from this rostrum by the morally powerful voice of our sister Republic, Costa Rica, an example of democracy in the world, we are prepared to declare a unilateral cease-fire, to be put into effect as soon as the FMNL decides likewise - and this to make it possible for negotiations to move forward in an atmosphere marked by less tension and greater trust and, in particular, to provide real signals to the Salvadorian people that the political will of both parties is now firmly and permanently addressed to peace. That would be a temporary measure of effective good will, not intended to gain breathing space in the war, but rather to cement credibility and peace until the political agreements leading to a definitive cessation of armed confrontation can be arrived at.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

We are sure that a cease-fire decided on unilaterally by each one of the parties, which would enter into force at the same time, would speed up the negotiations because, in the phase that we are in now, violence merely impedes that process. Violence has many times been used as an alleged means of pressure to bring about a final solution, and all it has done is aggravate the war. Let us begin to use the resources of progressive peace-making, which are those which reality demands of us, and which the people, universally, in its suffering and stoicism yearns for.

As to the agreement on human rights entered into by the Government and the FMNL in San José, for us its validity is immediate, and we are prepared to welcome international verification by the United Nations when the Organization so agrees. Let us hope that this will be as soon as possible.

This session of the General Assembly will be remembered for very varied reasons. It is the first which has occurred since the dismantling of the cold war. However, it is taking place at a time when there are serious prospects for a regional conflict in the Middle East in which, at this very time, there is extreme tension between the forces of reason and right and those of outrageous arbitrary behaviour and barbarity.

In Europe, an impressive phenomenon is occurring. It will reach a culmination on 3 October, with the unification of Germany, which until only a few months ago seemed such a remote possibility. We welcome it and we congratulate its protagonists. This general situation of renewal and rapprochement in Europe on the threshold of 1992, when united Europe will give a new face to contemporary history, is another vivid lesson for the peoples.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

Two new Members have joined our Organization - Liechtenstein and Namibia. We welcome both of them with deep satisfaction. In the special case of Namibia, we wish to emphasize the role played by the international community, particularly the United Nations, in the satisfactory and civilized culmination of the lengthy struggle of the noble Namibian people to achieve their independence. This is a step that provides well-founded hope to trust that definitive stability is possible in the short-term in southern Africa in the light of the principles of equality and freedom, which are necessary for a lasting solution to national and international conflicts in today's world.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

We viewed with pleasure the current dialogue between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and we fervently hope that it will come to fruition for the benefit and prosperity of the noble Korean nation. None the less, we believe that there is no need to delay any further the acceptance of the Republic of Korea as a member of the United Nations, since it meets the prerequisites for membership and since, moreover, its participation would be of great value for attaining the purposes of the Charter.

In another connection, this Assembly will also be remembered for the unprecedented Presidential Summit for Children and for the unanimous concern of Governments about the catastrophic dangers of environmental deterioration, the drug traffic and drug addiction. The subject of the protection and restoration of life is now very much in the forefront of mankind's consciousness, and that fact is reflected as one of the principal concerns of this body. We join in this great effort in behalf of life on our turbulent planet and we declare our endorsement now for any initiative agreed upon in this respect. In our country, we are working pragmatically for the benefit of children and are firmly committed to bringing about a drastic reduction in the levels of malnutrition and disease and in the rate of school drop-outs during our remaining years in office. We are making a frontal assault on drug abuse and are determined to save the environment, for which we have designed, inter alia, a programme of national parks that will constitute inviolable reserves for the future.

The United Nations has been playing and will continue to play a primary role in bringing peace to Central America. We reiterate in this Assembly the need for the United Nations Observer Group in Central America to remain active, now more than ever, in order to guarantee the security of the region and eventually help to give final form to the peace agreement in El Salvador.

(President Cristiani-Burkard)

We view the development of Central American and Salvadorian events with hope and realism. Our Government has declared the year 1990-1991 the Year of Peace. Peace is on the move. We say this with firm conviction. In the last year we have worked tirelessly for peace. The Salvadorian people fervently prays and eagerly hopes that war will disappear from our land. From this rostrum, we wish to ask God to enlighten all of us so that we may soon find the only path that will lead us to the future: national reconciliation.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of El Salvador for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Alfredo Felix Cristiani-Burkard, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Carlos Andres Perez, President of the Republic of Venezuela, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Venezuela, Mr. Carlos Andres Perez, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President PEREZ (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of my Government, allow me to congratulate you very sincerely, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. Your personal qualities and experience are a sure guarantee of an efficient and productive co-ordination of the work of this session. Your election is also a well-deserved tribute to your country, Malta, a land of age-old culture, continually present in the history of the Western world.

(President Perez)

I wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Joseph Nanven Garba, who guided the activities of the Assembly's preceding session with skill, wisdom and balance.

We take special pleasure in welcoming two new Member States: the Republic of Namibia and the Principality of Liechtenstein. Venezuela has been an unswerving supporter of the Namibian people's struggle for independence. As a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, Venezuela took an active part in the Council's determined defence of the Namibian cause. We hail the advent of Namibia to independent life and its accession to membership in the international community as a sovereign nation after seven decades of domination by the infamous apartheid régime of South Africa, the shame of mankind.

(President Perez)

Having gained its political independence, Namibia needs to achieve the economic and social development necessary to consolidate independent statehood and a democratic society. The support of the international community is essential if it is to meet those goals. Venezuela has already approached the Namibian authorities with a view to identifying possibilities for co-operation in the fields of energy, mining and fisheries. At the multilateral level, Venezuela has also pledged to contribute to co-operation projects for Namibia.

With respect to the interminable and ominous conflict of apartheid, Venezuela calls upon all nations not to suspend or ease sanctions against South Africa until the conclusion of agreements that put into effect President De Klerk's efforts and meet leader Nelson Mandela's proposals.

I must express my great pleasure at the reunification of Germany, which will be formalized on 3 October - an event we Venezuelans view as the culmination of a difficult stage of history and as the beginning of a new stage which will provide a lasting example of the peaceful building of a new international order. We share the joy of the German people and express our hope that this event will show the entire world the fruits of reconciliation and understanding.

I represent a country of profound democratic commitment and a long tradition of peace. Our international activities have always focused on removing every obstacle to harmony and co-operation between nations. For that reason we welcome and support initiatives submitted to the General Assembly to strengthen the fundamental responsibility of the United Nations to guarantee the two inseparable objectives of world peace and international justice, particularly now that events we could never have predicted only a few months ago have led for the first time since the Second World War to steady progress towards genuine global understanding.

(President Perez)

These sudden changes in the structure of international relations call for a careful study of international ethics, which are so often infringed upon by great Powers and by regional conflicts. There is dramatic proof today that the considerable reduction in the nuclear threat and East-West détente do not necessarily mean the disappearance of serious international conflicts. The present crisis in the Persian Gulf is a painful case in point.

During the last turbulent 45 years of world history, nuclear peace has been achieved by means of an ambiguous balance, cynically called the balance of terror, which has continually pushed aside other available control mechanisms. Venezuela rejects that monstrous approach to restraining bipolar confrontation, confident that the reply to the threat of international anarchy or regional conflict does not lie in mutual threats or military escalation. We have always believed it possible to construct an equilibrium for peace, based on justice, equal rights for all peoples to enjoy their resources; we have always believed that all peoples have a right to well-being, allowing for a genuine system of collective security, the raison d'être of the United Nations. That is why we have always advocated a new international economic order which we must keep free of any tinge of confrontation. We believe that now that the cold war is over, there are new prospects for more intensive programmes of disarmament and greater co-operation for development. We believe that today more than ever before the United Nations has a chance to attain the universal dream of an equilibrium for peace based on understanding and co-operation. Dialogue for concerted international action in the economic sphere must be initiated.

Last August, at its Caracas meeting, the South Commission, under the chairmanship of the former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, issued its final report, a valuable and exhaustive document written in the language of dialogue

(President Perez)

characteristic of these new times. It deserves to become a basic instrument that can inspire constructive dialogue between North and South.

Venezuela would also like the end of bipolar confrontation to bring about the disappearance of a system whereby some Powers believe they have the obligation or the right to assume the individual role of taking control and ensuring the security of the world. Now that the East-West confrontation is over, the United Nations should perform that function in the name of international law and the principles of the Charter signed by all the countries represented here. In his historic address to the Assembly, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, spoke along those lines.

A mechanism must be devised to ensure the implementation of decisions and sanctions adopted by the United Nations in response to aggression against any of its Members; to facilitate the demilitarization of conflicts through law-enforcement and support activities in regions where the adversaries in a conflict feel threatened, as was recently the case in Namibia and Nicaragua; or to support efforts at peace-making and democratization. All this would encourage States that feel attacked or threatened to look to the United Nations for a response within the Organization rather than bolstering their security at the expense of their peoples, through a costly arms race. It will be possible to achieve the non-proliferation of new and increasingly destructive weapons only if there is an alternative mechanism of effective deterrence.

If the United Nations cannot provide that assurance, resources will continue to be diverted from education, health, nutrition, growth and development to offensive and defensive arsenals in an illusory race for autonomous security and defence.

(President Perez)

Venezuela agrees with those who say that the end of confrontation between the super-Powers opens the way to great opportunities for peace, but also to great risks. The ability of the great Powers to influence or settle any future problems or conflicts is, paradoxically, negligible. For the most part, existing problems are of a global nature, affecting all nations, which are linked in general interdependence in all areas - from the economy, trade and welfare to the environment and natural resources.

(President Perez)

Although it is urgently necessary to secure the benefits brought by the end of the cold war and to take additional measures to reduce to a minimum the risk of conflicts between nations, there is an equally pressing need to find safe and reliable ways to implement the other tenets supporting the multilateral system, such as the right to both economic and social development.

A year ago, at this same forum for international dialogue, I proposed that we dedicate this last decade of the century to the children, with the aim of substantially reducing infant mortality, making primary schooling available world-wide and eradicating severe malnutrition. I also invited us all to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child as part of the new international ethics. The signing of the Convention by a majority of the States Members of the United Nations, the Children's Summit held last weekend and the disappearance of East-West tensions all combine to create a climate conducive to a global commitment to go beyond statements of good intentions and deal with the task of combating child mortality, protecting nursing infants and pregnant women, effectively improving their health and securing for children a proper education and qualification for work.

I realize that such a massive programme requires substantial resources, so I propose that Member States agree on a 10 per cent reduction in our military budgets and allocate that 10 per cent to a United Nations fund for social development, to be used in a frontal assault on the poverty that crushes and exterminates hundreds of millions of children throughout the world.

As is shown by the recent experience of Latin America, if the progress of democracy in our countries is to become irreversible we need a final solution to the problems of critical and extreme poverty. The inevitable programmes of macro-economic adjustment, essential if we are to modernize our societies, cannot

(President Perez)

advance without parallel action against hunger, unemployment and lack of opportunity, which begin with malnutrition and lack of health care in childhood and continue with lack of study opportunities and employment opportunities for the young.

Latin America is now fully committed to democracy as a political system. But democracy cannot be sustained on a social foundation of persistent poverty. The repeated demands for more favourable trade conditions and better economic and financial international relations are not mere rhetoric. The establishment of a new world order is essential for resolving the basic conflict of inequality between human beings. An attitude springing from basic ethics must govern relations between the most powerful countries and the poorest. On 16 November 1976, at this same rostrum of mankind, I said:

"The building of a new international economic order is an imperative for peace ... Otherwise,"

I said then and repeat now -

"the political balance of the world will be in serious jeopardy."

(A/31/PV.67, para. 16)

This is a time of historical transition. Now that we are 10 years away from the twenty-first century ideological schemes conceived in the nineteenth century no longer apply in our present reality. As a Latin American, I must express my concern over the way in which economic variables receive more emphasis than political and social ones. The modernization of our societies cannot ignore the importance of internal balance. If social conflicts arise in developing nations, if the gap between their inhabitants deepens, conditions will inevitably become ripe for international imbalances. Our peoples want to live in a democracy, but there is no democracy without social justice.

(President Perez)

International co-operation cannot be contingent solely upon the formal reorganization of government finances in countries suffering critically from fiscal imbalances. We must find an answer to the fiscal crisis, but we must also find an answer to the social crisis. In truth, fiscal and social crises are but two sides of the same coin. International co-operation must directly address the structural issues of the crisis, eliminating protectionist tendencies in developed countries, the ever more intolerable effects of foreign debt and the absurd attitude that the necessities of macro-economic adjustments are merely a technical problem, with no social impact or political consequences.

Latin America received with interest and satisfaction the Americas Initiative proposed by the President of the United States, Mr. George Bush. The proposal of a free-trade zone with the north of the American continent raises the hope that the veil of silence and the misunderstandings that have marked relations between the two Americas will now begin to vanish. We sincerely hope that the Americas Initiative will initiate a definitive break with isolation. As the world rapidly moves towards big economic blocs, the United States and Latin America cannot continue to turn their backs on each other, as they have for decades. We shall now need each other.

In the long run the Americas Initiative could create conditions for the benefits of competition, now gravely lacking in our economic and trade relations, to be felt. The structural changes to be brought about by free trade and access to a bigger market would spur our economic growth. The elimination of discrimination against countries in the southern part of the American hemisphere would create conditions favourable to joint negotiations. Yet, at the same time, the Americas Initiative poses a formidable challenge to Latin American countries. We shall no

(President Perez)

longer be able to hide behind the rhetoric of integration. If we want to participate in the successful development of this project, we must carry out the tasks essential for intensifying co-operation between ourselves and strengthening intra-regional trade. We must develop strategic alliances between Governments, public and private institutions and research centres of the countries involved, and promote the establishment of networks of linked production and service enterprises, encouraging the setting of uniform technical standards.

(President Perez)

It is only by raising the level of intra-Latin American interdependence that we can become competitive at the international level. We Latin American countries must seriously explore the liberalization of our reciprocal trade. We must strengthen our co-operation in transport and bolster the institutions promoting its integration. Only then will we avoid the delusion of believing that we might accede individually to the benefits of the Americas Initiative.

It is indeed paradoxical that, in the present post-cold-war climate of progress in integration and the appearance of a new spirit favouring international co-operation, we see winds of war blowing over our planet. The crisis in the Persian Gulf concerns us all and particularly countries that, like Venezuela, are producers of oil and members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). From the moment Iraq invaded Kuwait, Venezuela strove to create a framework for negotiation. We do not believe in a military solution to the conflict. We insist on a political way out of the crisis. Arab nations have a decisive role to play, and as part of the Western Hemisphere and as partners in OPEC we should encourage that. We have tried to use the multiple levels on which we act to generate agreements that would reduce the effects of the conflict on the world's oil markets.

In this respect I should like to emphasize the responsible and stabilizing course taken by OPEC, an organization in its thirtieth year of existence. The great nations of the industrialized North - the main oil importers - must acknowledge that if OPEC had not decided temporarily to cover the market deficit, the escalation in oil prices and the consequent destabilization of the world's economy would have been much worse.

Neither OPEC nor the industrialized world can allow abrupt price increases, nor can we tolerate - once the Gulf crisis is resolved - equally abrupt drops in

(President Perez)

the price of crude. Such excessive fluctuations are harmful to us all, consumers and producers alike, and only favour speculators who do not care much about the well-being of nations or the world economy.

We share in this responsibility as producers of a large portion of today's market and, above all, as possessors of the greatest crude reserves. Exploitation of these reserves is what will guarantee the world's future needs in energy. However, it will require prices that secure regular revenues for the producers and sufficient resources to finance the investments necessary to ensure present levels of production and replenishment of reserves. For many decades to come oil will continue to be a fundamental ingredient of development, and neither producers nor consumers can permit a state of disarray in the oil market.

I hereby propose an oil conference of producers and consumers, under the auspices of the United Nations, to be convened urgently in order to address, once and for all, the political reality of oil. The first step of such an encounter should be a meeting of the OPEC countries and the International Energy Agency.

I should like on this occasion to reiterate our concern regarding the impact of excessively high oil prices on the development plans of third world countries that are totally dependent on oil imports. For the last 10 years Mexico and Venezuela have tried to reduce this impact on the economies of Central America and the Caribbean through the San José Agreement. However, this kind of solidarity cannot be undertaken unilaterally and must be part of global solutions whereby industrialized nations seriously assume their responsibilities regarding international co-operation.

(President Perez)

The industrialized countries must share the responsibily for economic growth and political stability in that vulnerable region of the hemisphere so as to prevent new explosions of violence or unlimited continuation of existing ones. We oil-producing countries are aware of the need to help the oil-importing countries of the third world with compensation measures such as the OPEC Fund or the San José Agreement. We shall continue to do so. But we think that the commitments of the countries that can afford more should be extended.

Just as OPEC assumed its share of responsibility in raising production to offset the temporary scarcity of crude on the international markets, and inasmuch as the great Powers seek to have others share the cost of a military presence in the Persian Gulf, countries with fewer resources need support in overcoming the situation of scarce supply and high oil prices.

In this respect, allow me to express my satisfaction at the proposal made by the President of France, Mr. Francois Mitterrand, to begin

> "discussion of a comprehensive plan for assistance to the developing world, a plan that would be fed by new resources and that would lay the ground for an in-depth consideration of the subject by all the participants in what could well become a tragedy to end all tragedies if we do not make up our minds to change our ways, to step up our pace and to rethink our goals."
>
> (A/45/PV.4, p. 47)

Thus, we urge the more powerful nations to co-operate in meeting the energy demand of the poorer countries in a manner that may be stable and permanent, rather than accidental or fortuitous. Venezuela, together with our partners in OPEC and other oil-exporting countries not members of OPEC, such as Mexico, is willing to proceed with co-operation programmes such as the San José Agreement, but we also look forward to hearing proposals from large industrialized nations in support of the stabilization we advocate.

(President Perez)

What this Assembly may decide will set the guiding principles for the role the international community wants the United Nations to play at this critical time of transition. We now begin to realize, at long last, that many of its past limitations were due to the bipolar conflict. Now that the conflict is over and the ensuing reforms are on course, we aspire to return to the original postulates of the Organization, by revising the Charter if necessary, to make the Organization fully and democratically capable of intervening preventively in the many problems of the world and of addressing those already looming at a distance, of which I would make particular mention of those related to peace and economic and social development, where so much joint effort is still needed.

All the nations of the world, and particularly the militarily and economically powerful ones, must understand that it is only through a body of international ethics, based on genuine respect for international law as embodied in the Charter and in Treaties and Conventions signed by all States under the sponsorship of the United Nations, that justice, peace and world stability can be upheld.

(President Perez)

There have been frequent violations of these principles, treaties and conventions in the past. Yet it is precisely now, at this new stage that holds out such promise for mankind, that the world has unanimously rejected the violation of Kuwait's sovereignty by Iraq. This must become the beginning of a new, genuine international ethic in which any kind of unilateral intervention is outlawed and international order is re-established by the submission to the United Nations and other international bodies of any existing or looming conflicts. The occupied Palestinian territories and Cambodia, to give just two examples of conflicts of major significance to the world, must be acted upon by the United Nations, after the sovereignty of Kuwait has been restored.

I cannot conclude without referring to the co-operation we expect from the United Nations, including the General Assembly, in regard to conflicts of concern to the countries of Latin America. I refer here to peace in El Salvador and to the electoral process in Haiti.

The efforts exerted by the Secretary-General with the FMLN and the Salvadorian Government are of tremendous importance and worthy of praise. We hope that the Assembly will give its full support to the Secretary-General's initiatives and urge both the FMLN and the Government of El Salvador to eliminate existing obstacles to an agreement that will restore peace and well-being to a people devastated by more than a decade of fratricidal war.

The Haitian people want democracy and peace. They need the solidarity of the world in their efforts to emerge from their distressing state of exhaustion after long years of cruel dictatorship. I should like to request the General Assembly at this forty-fifth session to adopt the draft resolution submitted by Latin American and Caribbean countries, in regard to the support requested of the United Nations by the Government of Haiti for the holding of an election next December.

(President Perez)

I should like to conclude by expressing Venezuela's support for and full confidence in the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. His leadership, prudent yet steadfast, has brought about many of the changes we have witnessed in recent years. To him and all the staff working with him, we extend our gratitude. We express the hope that they will continue their outstanding work in the interest of the international community, at this new, promising stage of the Organization's life.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Venezuela for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Carlos Andres Perez, President of Venezuela, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MUSHOBEKWA KALIMBA WA KATANA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): Mr. President, the forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly has begun in political and economic circumstances which are particularly alarming for the international community as a whole. Peaceful solutions to all the questions to be considered during your presidency are hoped for. On behalf of the people of Zaire and its President, Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, I therefore congratulate you on your unanimous election to this important post in our Organization. Your outstanding intellectual and moral qualities, coupled with your long experience as a statesman in Malta, are an absolute guarantee of the success of the work of the current session of the General Assembly. I assure you that my delegation is fully prepared to make a positive contribution throughout your term of office.

I should like, furthermore, to acknowledge the praiseworthy work done by your predecessor, Mr. Joseph Garba of the Republic of Nigeria. I feel it my duty to pay

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

a warm tribute to him for the progress he helped our Organization to make in its constant quest for peace throughout the world and for the dynamism he displayed throughout his term of office.*

My delegation wishes to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his tireless efforts on behalf of international peace and security, efforts that are leading to the peaceful settlement of conflicts throughout the world, and to express its great appreciation to him for the outstanding manner in which he has discharged his difficult functions as the artisan and corner-stone of our Organization.

Having enhanced its prestige and seen its ideals triumph, our Organization should be proud to count among its Members today the new Republic of Namibia and the Principality of Liechtenstein. Zaire welcomes the presence of the delegations of these two fraternal countries in our midst at the current session and assures them of our co-operation, both in the United Nations and between our respective countries.

At a time when a new wind is blowing throughout the world, bringing hope for democratic renewal in Eastern Europe as well as in Africa and Latin America and fostering the emergence of a climate of confidence in East-West and North-South relations, the international community is once again faced with a renewal of tension in the Persian Gulf and in the Middle East which challenges the values, the principles and the rules of international law calling for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

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* Mr. Thompson (Fiji), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

The Middle East crisis, which, recently, has been marked by the massacre of innocent civilians in the occupied Arab territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip - events that fanned the flame of the intifidah - aroused the conscience of the entire world when, on 25 May last, the Security Council was convened in Geneva to consider the situation and to find an appropriate solution. Tension in that part of the world had reached its peak, and no one expected tension to break out in an area so close to a region already troubled by the absence of peace and security since 1945.

In the Middle East, Iraq's invasion and illegal occupation of Kuwait are the last straw and justify the presence of naval and air forces from other military Powers in the region. But this presence exposes the entire region to the risk of an armed conflagration, probably to a war, whose victims, once again, would be the innocent - women, children and people who, motivated by a spirit of friendship and co-operation, came from all parts of the world to make their contribution to the development of that desert region.

The entire international community, whose representatives are assembled at this forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, has been called upon to deal with the crisis and, if possible, to find a peaceful solution. My country will continue to join all peace- and justice-loving members of the Security Council in the search for a peaceful settlement to the conflict, so that the Kuwaiti people may regain the independence of which they have been robbed and its sovereignty as a Member of this Organization.

At the same time, we must deal with the question of Palestine, which is the crux of the Middle East conflict. We must see to it that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) are implemented in an effective manner, as those resolutions define the conditions for the establishment of a just and lasting

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

peace in the Middle East - namely, the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force or by war; the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from Arab territories occupied since 1967; the termination of all belligerency; respect for, and recognition of, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area, and its right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders free from threats or acts of force; and the necessity for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem and for guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area.

The Security Council, in resolution 338 (1973), decided that negotiations between the parties to the fighting in the Middle East should begin immediately, but these people continue to oppose any spirit of dialogue and negotiation. Thus, it is incumbent on the international community to bring about between the protagonists a disposition for peace and discussion, all the while overcoming psychological, historical, legal and other obstacles.

Certainly my delegation is convinced that peace requires, first and foremost, justice and equality for the Arab people of Palestine, who, like the people of Israel, have a right to a homeland and a State. This has long been understood by the United Nations General Assembly, which, on 29 November 1947, laid down the principles for a Jewish State and for a Palestinian Arab State by adopting resolution 181 (II), which contained the Plan of Partition of Palestine. Zaire places its hope in the United Nations, which, within the scope of its historic responsibilities, gave a State to the Jews of the Diaspora and decided on the creation of a Palestinian Arab State, which it must now succeed in setting up. Similarly, the international status of Jerusalem must be safeguarded in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

As for Lebanon, my delegation believes that the General Assembly should constantly follow developments in that country and, in this regard, adopt a firm position - one that would preserve the territorial integrity, unity and sovereignty of the country, so that an end might be put to all external interference and foreign military presence in that State which is a Member of the United Nations.

Zaire will work to promote co-operation with Arab countries in the context of South-South relations.

Asia, which continues to see tension in Afghanistan, in Cambodia and in the relations between the two Koreas, in spite of the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the announced, but not yet verified, withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia, seems to be bogged down in talks, which have not yet led to substantial progress. Indeed, in Afghanistan the conditions of peace that should encourage the return of Afghan refugees, primarily from Pakistan, have not yet been brought about.

In Cambodia, the political factions, which met at the initiative of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, as well as in Paris with the co-operation of the permanent members of the Security Council, have not yet managed to achieve satisfactory progress towards the establishment of a democratic State, unified and within the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

We welcome also the unification of the two Yemens and, as of 3 October 1990, of the two Germanys. This new era of unification should extend to the two Koreas, whose absence from the United Nations has been a handicap. It has been observed that the United Nations framework enabled both the two Germanys and the two Yemens to embark on fruitful contacts, which were the basis for the negotiations leading to the accords that we all welcome. Therefore my delegation is of the view that

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

admission of the two Koreas to the United Nations, in whatever way they choose, would be likely to accelerate the process of negotiations towards unification.

This year 1990 - has been a historic one for Africa. Important events have marked the political life of the continent after 30 years of independence for most of its countries. The freeing of Nelson Mandela, after 27 years of illegal detention in South African prisons, the independence of Namibia, obtained at the cost of great loss of human life, the victorious struggle waged by the South West Africa People's Organization, which the international community supported in every possible way, and, finally, the democratization process that gave pride of place to a multi-party system in many countries, including my own, illustrate that 1990 has been a political turning-point for Africa as a whole.

There is no doubt that an unprecedented economic recession, compounded by the weight of external indebtedness, has characterized the African economy, in spite of the praiseworthy efforts made by a substantial number of African Governments in the framework of structural adjustment and of agreements with the International Monetary Fund.

The progress that has been achieved in the political sphere has, however, met the hopes of the African peoples. Indeed, the political changes currently under way in Africa, with a view to the increased democratization of its institutions, are justified, on one hand, by a wave of democratic renewal, which has swept over the countries of Eastern Europe, and, on the other hand, by the determination of African peoples to enter into a new period of democracy in which the participation of all Africans in the management of public affairs will be increased.

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

In Zaire, specific action has been taken, after broad consultations of the population, conducted by the Head of State, to advance towards democratic reforms, which should lead towards the Third Republic. It was solely the political will of the Zairian people that underlay the adoption of a multi-party system; no foreign State brought any pressure whatsoever to bear. This new path chosen by the Zairian people can in no wi e be interpreted as being the result of any concession made in order to obtain additional official development aid; the decision was taken by the Zairian people itself.

It should be stated in this regard that no linkage should be attempted between aid and democracy in Africa, for that might draw the economic, trading and co-operation relations between Africa and its foreign partners into a new style of international relations, one based on diktat.

At this point I should like to appeal to the international community: all peace-loving and justice-loving States should show their solidarity and increase their co-operation with African States, so that Africa will not be marginalized, to the advantage of other regions of the world, at a time when all African States want to make fundamental changes in the political and economic orders in their countries.

In southern Africa, the granting of independence to Namibia on 21 March, which expanded the frontiers of freedom in Africa, was cause for justifiable pride for the whole continent. The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) won the elections in Namibia by democratic means and raised to the highest position in the land a valiant son of Africa, the uncontested leader of SWAPO, now the first President of the Republic of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma. On behalf of the Zairian Government and people, I should like to pay a resounding tribute to him and to our brothers, the people of Namibia, for having overcome the illegal occupation of Namibia and freed their country from the colonial yoke.

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

Bordering this new independent State, there are new political developments under way since the accession to power of President De Klerk and the freeing on 11 February of Nelson Mandela, a worthy and distinguished son of Africa who embodies in his own person the struggle against racial discrimination, racism and apartheid. The steps taken so far by President De Klerk are, in our view, a prelude to the radical changes which must be made towards the total dismantling of apartheid in South Africa. Zaire wishes to reaffirm its solidarity with the oppressed people of South Africa and give assurance of its total support in this crucial phase of the struggle.

Zaire stands beside that indomitable fighter for the freedom and equality of peoples, Nelson Mandela, and pays him a well-deserved tribute for his courage, far-sightedness and unselfishness, which will leave an indelible mark on the history of his country.

Zaire will support any action the General Assembly may plan with a view to speeding up the effective implementation of the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session, devoted to apartheid. My country believes in dialogue, and particularly in the one which has just been launched by President De Klerk and the Vice-President of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), Nelson Mandela, between the two communities in South Africa, white and black, a dialogue which should lead to the total eradication of apartheid and the advent of a democratic and non-racial society in South Africa.

The recent confrontations which have pitted blacks against each other should end, and in their place there should be coherent, co-ordinated and well-orchestrated action by the black leaders round the flag of an undisputed leader able to represent the black community as a whole in the negotiations which have now begun.

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

In northern Africa, more specifically in Western Sahara, the Secretary-General is continuing his efforts, which we firmly support, for the holding of a referendum there. My delegation wishes the Secretary-General complete success in achieving that objective.

If there is one area which is closely bound up with the economic and social development of third-world countries, it is disarmament. General and complete disarmament, as it is construed in the Declaration of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, no longer seems merely an ideal to be pursued by Member States thanks to the relaxation in international relations between East and West that began in Washington on 7 December 1987, when the United States of America and the Soviet Union signed the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, which was ratified in June 1988.

In the area of multilateral negotiations, tangible results have been achieved in the area of chemical weapons, and we understand that the draft convention prohibiting the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons is to be finalized by the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva in the near future.

We all know that the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, held in New York between 16 and 20 April of this year, devoted to international economic co-operation and, in particular, to revitalizing growth and development in the developing countries, challenged the international community when it declared that:

> "In an increasingly interdependent world, the developing countries should play an important role in the growth and expansion of the world economy for the progress and prosperity of all peoples." (A/S-18/14, p. 5, para. 3)

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

It also asked Member States to be prepared, in a new spirit of solidarity, to demonstrate a new will to act at the international level in an integrated manner in order to improve the international economic environment and to speed the expansion of the world economy and the economic growth of the developing countries.

In the face of the internal and external factors which hinder development in under-equipped countries, my delegation believes that the establishment by the international community of a consistent investment policy in the developing countries could increase their productive capacity and help them, through increased exports, to obtain more substantial currency resources for financing their own development and for paying off their external debts.

In this way, the climate of confidence created by the democratization process which has begun in most third-world countries could turn out to be a factor of fundamental importance in promoting North-South relations and could encourage the release of new technologies to benefit those countries, in the form of partnerships or joint ventures.

In dealing with the debt issue, it should be pointed out that the management of public and private indebtedness has been made more difficult by the extreme instability of interest and exchange rates. In the face of that instability, the financial markets have developed a number of techniques, first called the Baker Plan and later the Brady Plan, to enable debtors to defer payments, reduce costs and decrease the likelihood of unpleasant surprises caused by changes in interest and exchange rates.

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

The Baker Plan, which was based on the hypothesis of more rapid economic growth to enable debtor countries to solve their indebtedness problems, did not bear fruit for the simple reason that it was based on the low export earnings of the debtor countries in international markets caused especially by protectionist measures and the reduction in direct investment flows, not to speak of stagnation and external assistance, which led to a slowing down of economic growth rates and even to negative growth rates in many cases.

Our appeal for investment is thus largely justified by this analysis: by the end of 1989, the total indebtedness of all the developing countries had reached $1.290 billion, of which $264 billion was African.

With a view to finding some grounds for understanding in dealing with the environment and development, we should mention a graver threat to our planet, the risk of the emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere causing a greenhouse effect. An increase in the planet's average temperature will lead to a change in rainfall levels and a deterioration in crop conditions in the major temperate and grain-producing areas.

In this respect, my country joined in the Hague Declaration on the depletion of the ozone layer and on atmospheric pollution and climate change. It supports the development of a framework convention in order to preserve our planet and the future of mankind.

Zaire, which has 47 per cent of Africa's tropical forests within its territory, is helping to protect the natural environment by increasing to 15 per cent of its territory the protected reserves where rare species such as the okapi, the white rhinoceros and the gorilla live in full freedom.

As one of the countries that initiated the World Charter for Nature, Zaire has set up a national committee to follow up on the preparatory work of the United

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992. Furthermore, Zaire supports the proposal to strengthen the role of the United Nations Environment Programme. The Programme's impact can only be more visible with the creation of subregional representation and with participation at the grassroots level in the world effort to protect the environment.

Last weekend the World Summit for Children gave special attention to the needs and protection of children and the consideration that should be given to every child in the world. My delegation fully agrees with the principle that every child has the right to enjoy all the rights recognized and guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights without any distinction as to race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political views or other opinions, and without any such distinction with regard to a child's parents or legal guardian. That is why my country duly appreciates the World Summit of Heads of State and Government just held at the Headquarters of the Organization with a view to expressing most solemnly the support of all nations for respect for children's rights. It should be pointed out that the Convention on the Rights of the Child was signed by my country, which has already ratified it.

In conclusion, I reaffirm on behalf of my delegation, and on my own behalf, the dedication of my country, Zaire, to the principle of the sovereign equality of Member States as laid down in the United Nations Charter. There is no need here perhaps to recall once again that pursuant to the Charter of our Organization Member States have proclaimed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in equal rights for men and women, and have declared themselves resolved to foster social progress and to establish better living conditions in greater freedom.

(Mr. Mushobekwa Kalimba Wa Katana, Zaire)

Zaire intends to continue its active participation in the activities of the United Nations, whose role would seem to be decisive in the area of international peace and security. As a member of the Security Council and of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Zaire will spare no effort to bring about the triumph of right, justice, equity and equality, all of which underpin any activity of our Organization to safeguard peace throughout the world.

The encouraging results of the efforts of all mankind show that, given the concern and determination of all, international peace and security can be maintained. A positive overview, however minimal, makes us optimistic for the future. May this forty-fifth session help to increase such optimism.

Mr. SANI BAKO (Niger) (interpretation from French): For my delegation and for myself it is a pleasure to see Mr. Guido de Marco of Malta presiding over the work of this forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. We congratulate him most warmly. We want him to be assured that in the performance of his duties he will enjoy the full co-operation of the delegation of Niger. We are confident that under his distinguished guidance our work will be successful to a degree commensurate with the high hopes of our peoples individually and collectively.

His predecessor, General Joseph N. Garba of Nigeria, acquitted himself of his duties in a praiseworthy manner during a particularly busy year in which the General Assembly met three times in special session. We sincerely congratulate him on his brilliant accomplishments.

To the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, I wish once again to extend the cordial greetings of General Ali Saibou, President of the Republic of Niger, and his unreserved support for his action in the service of world peace and international co-operation.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

Some days ago, at the opening of this session, the Assembly welcomed into its midst the Principality of Liechtenstein as the 160th Member of the United Nations. We welcome its admission because we are already certain Liechtenstein will make a valuable contribution to the common endeavours of our nations in the service of peace and of progress.

Last year from this rostrum many distinguished persons from around the world quite rightly welcomed the emergence of a new era of dialogue and international understanding born of the improving climate between the super-Powers. The atmosphere of détente and co-operation has been maintained and indeed strengthened, as could be seen - until a few weeks ago - from the growing calm and progress towards the settlement of several regional conflicts, the persistence and worsening of which had for long years marked international relations at this end of the twentieth century.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

It seemed that a new vision of the world and international relations, based on confidence, mutual respect and faith in the future, was replacing the atmosphere of confrontation and mistrust of the post-war period. But recent events in the Gulf have cruelly reminded us that peace is, after all, precarious and fragile, because it can be won by man's wise conduct of affairs or lost by mad behaviour.

Iraq's invasion on 2 August last and then annexation of the free and sovereign Islamic and non-aligned State of Kuwait, is in every respect inadmissible behaviour that violates the most basic provisions of the Charters of the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, of which both countries are members.

Such actions run counter to all the rules of international law, good-neighbourliness and non-resort to the use or threat of force in relations between States, and respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity and have brought about a situation that today poses the grave threat of a conflict of incalculable consequences.

Such behaviour is inadmissible. It was only natural that it should have given rise to our indignation, our condemnation and our unequivocal demand for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi armed forces from Kuwaiti territory and the rightful return of the Government of Sheikh Jaber Al-Amad Al-Sabah. That had to be said with clarity and firmness by the Security Council, as it did not fail to do with promptness and determination, but above all with the unprecedented unanimity of its members.

For Niger, it is not a matter of taking sides with one country against another, or a fortiori taking sides with one camp against another, or one hemisphere against another. It is a matter of simply but firmly recognizing that in this unfortunate affair there has been a violation of law and the sacred principles of international morality and the conduct of States have been flouted.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

We must unequivocably reaffirm the primacy of law in international relations and the obligation of all States, large and small, powerful and weak, scrupulously to observe it in all circumstances, come what may.

Indeed, what would become of our world if one State, by virtue of its strength and power, could do away with another with impunity; if a State, by virtue of its strength and power, could, from one day to the next, decide the fate of another and bring to an end its very existence as an independent and sovereign State?

The international community's unanimous condemnation of Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait is encouraging and healthy, for it provides clear evidence that the nations of the world still hold to the sacred values of universal civilization and that the foundations of the international legal order are still very sound.

The demand for Iraq's total, immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait, for the restoration of Kuwait's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, for the immediate release of all foreigners held against their will in Iraq and Kuwait and for Iraq's cessation of threats against and intimidation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the other neighbouring States - all are, for my Government, indispensable pre-conditions for a peaceful solution to this conflict.

That is why we once again address an urgent appeal both to Iraq and to all the parties involved to show restraint and wisdom, to work diligently to find an honourable political and diplomatic solution, and to be courageous in their efforts to forestall the threat of an armed confrontation whose consequences under present circumstances would be disastrous, not only for the countries of the region but for mankind as a whole.

Indeed, all countries and regions of the world are already experiencing the adverse consequences of this crisis. Oil producers, oil exporters, developed countries, and developing countries especially, will pay dearly the already

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

unacceptable bill of a new oil shock. Hence it is our common duty to work together, peacefully and resolutely, to bring about the speedy end of the Gulf crisis.

The crisis has somewhat eclipsed other issues, other conflicts, other tragedies which, with equal urgency, call for the collective and responsible attention of our States. Indeed, at a time when events in the Gulf continue to make headlines world wide, there is a true human tragedy taking place in Africa - in Liberia, which is ravaged by civil war. The bloody clashes between factions which have been inflicted for several months now upon the population of this country on the verge of disintegration merit closer attention by African leaders and the international community, just as the physical and moral sufferings of the Liberian people require urgent humanitarian action.

Despite the dramatic turn of events in Liberia in recent weeks, Niger believes that everything must be done - and it can be done - to restore peace and unity to that country. We hope that the next extraordinary summit meeting of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) will find a salutary solution to this question.

In April this year, on the occasion of the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to international economic co-operation, our Assembly welcomed to its midst the newly independent Republic of Namibia, which thus took its place among the free nations of the world after a long national liberation struggle and thanks to the courageous and judicious action of the United Nations and its Secretary-General and of the entire international community. I hail and once again congratulate our Namibian brothers and assure them of the full and complete solidarity of Niger.

The world also welcomed the release of Nelson Mandela after 27 years of imprisonment. These achievements of the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

and the valiant South African people are commensurate with the sacrifices they have made; commensurate with the determination of their commitment. Above all, they constitute grounds for continuing and intensifying the pressure being exerted upon the apartheid régime. Of course, the South African Government, under the pressure of the valiant fighting forces and the international community, is trying to limit the damage by putting into place superficial reforms and changes that do not fundamentally undermine the apartheid system. But it is not reform of apartheid, or a softened apartheid with a human face that the black majority of South Africa needs. Apartheid - it can never be said too often - must disappear; it must be quite simply abolished.

The measures adopted by President De Klerk, positive though they may be, are entirely inadequate. They should not lead us to relax our efforts but rather to increase the pressure and the sanctions until the minority racist Government resolutely and irreversibly commits itself to introducing a democratic and non-racial society in South Africa.

And here we wish once again to affirm our solidarity with the oppressed people of South Africa and its vanguard organizations, the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), and with the front-line States, whose sacrifices have been enormous and contributions invaluable, and, indeed, with all the peoples of southern Africa.

In this regard, we welcome the significant progress made in the search for a true peace in Mozambique and for national reconciliation between our Angolan brothers.

The goodwill that has been seen recently between the protagonists in these conflicts should be consolidated in order to accelerate and make irreversible the movement towards peace, a peace that these peoples so sorely need in order to

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

devote themselves to the much more pressing and demanding tasks of national reconstruction and economic and social development.

With regard to intra-African conflicts, the same situations as last year still prevail and persist.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

In Western Sahara, we welcome the patient efforts of the Secretary-General, whose settlement plan received the blessing of the Security Council, when it adopted the plan on 27 June this year. We resolutely support that plan, whose principal aim is to enable the Organization to hold a referendum on self-determination and to establish lasting peace and stability in the region. The Secretary-General's efforts, in close correlation with those of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), should be strengthened and maintained now more than ever before.

The process between Chad and Libya launched on 31 August 1989 in Algiers seems to be continuing and becoming stronger, as the results of the recent meeting in Casablanca prove. Niger welcomes this development, which is encouraging in all respects, and appeals to both sides to turn their backs once and for all on confrontation and take the road of fraternal and constructive dialogue - the only way to bring understanding and peace to that subregion.

We are deeply concerned at the painful conflict that for a year now has pitted two brother countries, Senegal and Mauritania, against each other. Niger, a member of the Inter-Ministerial Mediation Commission of the OAU, maintains excellent relations of friendship and brotherhood with both countries on the bilateral level and through our ties in various subregional co-operation institutions, and is following developments very closely. We are convinced that Senegal and Mauritania can reach an understanding and overcome this unfortunate dispute between them so that they can once again live together in the brotherhood, solidarity and good-neighbourliness that always characterized their relations in the past. That is why we again address an earnest appeal to both parties to maintain their attitude of seeking peace and to show that they are open to dialogue. The Organization of African Unity, through the activities of the Inter-Ministerial

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

Mediation Commission, invites them to do so and expresses its fervent hope for rapid normalization and a final settlement of the conflict.

We rejoice that it is now almost two years since peace was restored between Iraq and Iran after eight years of fratricidal war, and that Security Council resolution 598 (1987) provided the framework, the basis and the driving force of the cease-fire and the settlement of that conflict. We hope that this desire for peace will prevail elsewhere as well.

May it also prevail with regard to the tragedies of all kinds that the heroic people of Palestine continues to endure. For nearly three years now the Palestinian people has pursued its sacred intifadah - launched exactly 1,000 days ago - while Israel, with impunity, goes about modifying the sociological and demographic structure of the occupied Arab territories by settling massive numbers of Jews displaced from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and in this it is following the classic pattern of colonial settlement. The international community should exert unrelenting pressure upon Israel to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories, to free Al-Quds Al-Sharif and to recognize the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to a homeland.

Niger continues to urge the convening without delay or useless manoeuvring of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The conference would endeavour to settle once and for all, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), all aspects of this long and painful conflict.

There is now a glimmer of hope in Lebanon. Some progress seems to be taking place in bringing that country security, stability, unity and territorial

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

integrity. Niger hails the courage and determination that have made possible the achievement of the Taif agreements and the continued work of the Tripartite Arab Commission, which must overcome the difficulties and obstacles that face it and succeed in its mission of restoring the peace, tranquillity and reconciliation so sorely needed by all the people of Lebanon.

Last year at this rostrum we welcomed the conclusion of the Geneva Agreement that made possible the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan which has now taken place. But we note that clashes between Afghan brothers continue, leaving countless victims and inflicting indescribable suffering upon that valiant people. That is why we are following with great attention the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative, to achieve a final solution to the Afghan conflict.

Similarly, we are observing with all the interest that befits our deep friendship for Cambodia the developments taking place there. The international community welcomed the decision to withdraw Vietnamese troops from that country. Even if the international Conference held in Paris from 30 July to 30 August 1989 did not fulfil all the hopes placed in it, it at least enabled the protagonists in the Kampuchean case to meet, to speak to each other and to set a new direction. The framework agreement on the Cambodian question concluded on 28 August 1990 between the five permament members of the Security Council is a decisive turning-point. It entrusts important responsibilities to the United Nations and its Secretary-General and generates a new dynamic, which we must hope will lead to a comprehensive political agreement that will bring true and lasting peace.

We are closely following the development of the situation on the Korean peninsula. The aspirations of the Korean nation to peaceful reunification are stronger today than ever before on both sides of the Panmunjom demilitarized zone. We are pleased to note that for the first time in the turbulent history of

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

inter-Korean relations, direct talks between the two parties at a high political level recently took place and are to continue. At a time when centripetal forces are dominating inter-State relations and when the dynamic toward unification is gaining ground against old divisions - as illustrated by the reunification of the two Yemens that has already taken place and the reunification of the two Germanys that is about to take place - it is encouraging to note the efforts exerted by the authorities of North and South Korea. These efforts deserve the blessing and support of the international community.

In Cyprus, we note that talks between the Greek and Turkish communities on the island have entered a new phase, in particular with proposals for the creation of a federation composed of two regions, one administered by the Turkish Cypriot community and the other by the Greek Cypriot community.

This is certainly a historic time for Central America, with a renewed diplomatic dynamic set in motion by the five Central American Presidents. The signature and implementation of the Esquipulas Agreements truly opened up the way to the quest for a just solution to the Central American crisis. We remain confident that the genius of the peoples of that region and the courage and sense of responsibility of their leaders will enable them to find the means to reach the true and lasting peace their peoples need. They deserve our full support and they may be assured that Niger encourages them in their efforts.

The end of the cold war and the thaw in East-West relations have made possible ever-more-frequent recourse to negotiated solutions to disputes between States. The new type of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and the whole international legal order with respect to disarmament - treaties, conventions and agreements - are making the arms race increasingly obsolete. The world is going through a period of détente and understanding of which we must take advantage

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

in order to bring down even the most solid barriers and do away with even the most tenacious taboos in armament matters, in order to achieve simultaneously conventional, nuclear and chemical disarmament.

I said last year from this rostrum that the survival of mankind is our common responsibility and requires that we avoid a nuclear disaster, which remains a possibility. It is certainly frustrating, we said, to note the state of the world and the existence of the striking, not to say the revolting, paradox of the exponential growth of military budgets and arsenals, on the one hand, and the poverty and chronic misery of the majority of the people of the world, on the other.

That is why, in Niger, we attach the greatest importance to the link between disarmament and development, and to the establishment of reliable and operational machinery to channel disarmament dividends towards development. While international détente is viewed as an urgent requirement for safeguarding, maintaining and strengthening world peace, we must note the strange paradox that the world economic situation continues inexorably to deteriorate.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

The victims of that situation are to be found primarily in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, all of them regions confronted with the tragedies of famine, poverty, illiteracy, disease, natural disasters, desertification and locust infestation. As survival societies, with disintegrated and dislocated economies ravaged by continuing crises, marginalized and increasingly excluded from world trade and international decision-making processes, the developing countries are increasingly reduced to muddling through from day to day.

Of course, for a time we had nourished some hope. For example, there was the eighteenth special session, devoted to international economic co-operation and particularly to the revitalization and economic growth of developing countries, held here last April; there was the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, which took place a few days ago in Paris; there was the fourth Lomé Convention between the countries of the European Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries; and there was the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade; and there is also the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, scheduled for 1991.

All these initiatives are justified in themselves because the growth and prosperity which can be seen in the economies of the North are in stark contrast with the deterioration of the economies of the South. A marked imbalance dominates the situation with regard to exchanges between those two hemispheres, of which one grows richer while the other grows inexorably poorer.

Today, with the process of universality characterizing the 1980s and this latter part of the twentieth century, we can see a growing interdependence between national economies and an increase in world trade. However, despite this growing interdependence, the prosperity of the developed countries has not trickled down to the great majority of developing countries. Thus, for example, it is thought that

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

between 1970 and 1985 the gap between the incomes and standards of living of the developed and the developing countries has continuously become greater. The average per capita income in the rich countries is today approximately 50 times that in the least developed countries.

This poor performance of the third-world economies during the 1980s, which persists even today, is the outcome of a whole series of factors, essentially exogenous, such as the debt crisis, the sudden decline in world commodity prices, growing protectionism, the fall in the volume of investments and the gradual decline in official development assistance.

Thus, especially where Africa is concerned, the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development is drawing to its conclusion without completely attaining its legitimate goals for the African populations. Yet that plan is the type of agreement concluded in good faith between partners accepting mutual commitments in good faith. Today we must observe that in the final analysis the commitments undertaken therein have not been realized to a reasonable extent. The mid-term review in 1988 has already noted this. The final review will, we hope, bring to light all the lessons that we should learn from what has occurred.

This Assembly is about to adopt a new international strategy that will guide the fourth United Nations development decade. We have taken stock of the Third Decade, and it must be said that it was a lost decade for the development of the third world, which bases its hopes on the new strategy. Therefore we hope that the fourth decade will bring innovative answers to the earnest questions of the poor, in the spirit of solidarity and joint responsibility that should characterize contemporary international relations.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

We must recall, in this regard, that during its eighteenth special session, held last April, the General Assembly conducted a very painstaking analysis of the world economic situation. The possibilities for the improvement of the situation of the developing countries contained in the Declaration that was adopted indicate what is at stake at the end of the twentieth century and the challenges that the international community must face. The declaration is also an expression of faith and a tangible expression of the predominant role that the United Nations intends to play as the preferred framework for multilateral co-operation and also as a profound force for international solidarity.

The Government of Niger sincerely hopes that this Declaration, unanimously adopted, will mark the real resumption of the North-South dialogue, the joint expression of a determination to reverse these trends. If we devote ourselves to this task, we can save mankind from the major dangers it faces today because of the terrible frustrations encountered by the majority.

While questions of peace, security and economic development remain at the forefront of our concerns, they must today vie with other priorities. I refer to social and environmental issues.

Questions relating to children, drugs and AIDS now have high priority on international agendas. Here in this Assembly last year we adopted the important Convention on the Rights of the Child, which scores of countries, including my own, have already signed and ratified, thus expressing the great importance they attach to this essential component of our societies.

Yesterday, on the initiative of the United Nations Children's Fund, a historic event took place, the World Summit for Children. This is the first time in the history of mankind that so many world leaders from every continent have met together to engage in a true profession of faith concerning the protection, development and survival of children.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

Niger associates itself with those nations that have expressed the hope that the Declaration issued at this historic Summit will be rapidly given effect and constitute a point of departure for world-wide concerted action for children.

As regards the war on drugs and the illicit traffic in narcotics, we consider this a matter of high priority. This phenomenon threatens States, entire regions of the world and even civilization itself. We express our solidarity with countries such as Colombia and others that have engaged in a struggle against the drug Mafia. However, concerted world-wide action is necessary to bring this calamity to an end.

The spread of AIDS, which is increasing day by day throughout the world, is of concern to all Governments. No country is safe from AIDS. No country can combat it on its own. It is international action of broad scope that is needed. Substantial resources, especially financial, must be mobilized to sustain that action in order to bring the best chances of success. The United Nations and the World Health Organization primarily but also non-governmental organizations and competent national institutions should be the driving force in this crusade against AIDS.

I now turn to development. Increasingly, nations are unanimously realizing the full value of a healthy environment and the great risks to our planet of the generalized and increasing deterioration of the environment. The struggle to protect the environment has today become a cardinal imperative.

Niger, because of its geographical situation at the heart of the Sahel, is deeply concerned over the various problems engendered by environmental deterioration. Climatic modifications acting on seasonal rainfall make all forecasts for agriculture from year to year unreliable. Desertification and soil

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

erosion are depriving our hard-working populations of their best lands, which constitute a major factor of production. All these elements are detrimental to the food self-sufficiency of our populations. However, environmental deterioration beyond my country also affects the atmosphere, the waters and the ozone layer, which has already been pierced in some places; and then there are acid rain, toxic wastes, industrial wastes and so on.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

All of this shows us how the environment problem must be approached as an integral part of development. The development plans of States and town and country planning should be based on a close relationship between environment and development from now on. We must stress the great importance we attach to the United Nations Conference in Brazil in 1992, which is to adopt a world plan of action for environmental protection to preserve present and future generations from ecological catastrophe.

Last year I indicated here the political and institutional process going on in my country and the great ambition of President Ali Saibou for Niger and its people to restore a republican legal order after several years under exceptional legal régimes.

Niger currently has republican institutions, the fruit of collective efforts and resolute will to join the ranks of fully democratic countries, giving each citizen the full enjoyment of his rights, with equal awareness of his duties.

However, Niger, like other countries of the third world, has not been spared by an unrelenting economic and financial crisis that runs counter to our every effort. I touched on some of the elements of this crisis earlier. It demands of us self-control, courage and serenity. In a spirit of openness and responsibility, it has led my Government, jointly with other sectors of society, to set in motion a number of political and economic responses.

Politically, our people, based on a lucid and responsible assessment of the evolution of the society of Niger, sees itself as an integral part of the general trends in the world, seeking ways and means for greater democracy and for the expression of multiple and even contradictory views, in short, the yearned-for advent of political pluralism.

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

To this end, at its session held last June the supreme organ of my country, the High Council of National Policy, decided to revise the National Charter and the Constitution. But, it must be understood that this will, above all, be the conclusion of endogenous processes particular to our people at this stage of its internal development and its sociological and political evolution. It is not the result of any outside influence; far from it.

This democratic development is finding a natural concomitant in a vast and ambitious programme of structural reform, whose purpose is to put the economy of Niger effectively on the road to endogenous and self-sustaining growth once again.

We intend to promote private initiative and the spirit of creativity and competitiveness necessary to enhance Niger's economic and commercial fabric.

Such an objective will certainly entail sacrifices, as it requires considerable external resources, and its implementation still requires unpopular social costs that generate movements that are hard to contain.

But, as I have said earlier, structural adjustment in our economies is an inescapable imperative. Thus, our Government must seek, in a spirit of joint responsibility, with the social partners and with external partners, accommodations that can preserve social peace and the development process.

Let me express our appreciation for the efforts made by our bilateral and multilateral partners and, particularly, the understanding shown by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. I hope that the statements we have heard here and the favourable measures announced last week at the annual meetings of the Bretton Woods institutions will rapidly take concrete shape, especially in the area of debt and official development assistance.

These problems are not peculiar to Niger. Their solution, we repeat, will determine the harmony, equilibrium and the very survival of mankind. They are the

(Mr. Bako, Niger)

major challenge to the international community. We must face these challenges together. We must collectively assume our responsibilities to present and future generations. We must show our commitment to the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations - the ideals of peace, solidarity and progress for all peoples. We must be present at our rendezvous with history.

Mr. AL-KHALIFA (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, allow me, at the outset of my statement, to present my sincere congratulations on your election to the Presidency of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, and to pay tribute to your friendly country, Malta. In wishing you success in conducting the proceedings of this session, we assure you of our readiness to co-operate with you in the furtherance of the common goals which our Organization is striving to achieve.

I would also like, on behalf of the delegation of my country, to express our thanks to Mr. Joseph Garba for his skill in conducting the proceedings of the Assembly during his presidency over the previous session, as well as the special sessions held in-between, for his distinguished efforts in the interest of the United Nations.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express the greatest appreciation to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his tireless efforts to enhance the role of the Organization in strengthening security and maintaining peace in the world.

It is also my pleasure to extend, once again, to the chairman and members of the delegation of the Republic of Namibia the congratulations of the State of Bahrain on the accession of their country to the United Nations. We regard this as an historic accomplishment by any standard, a true expression of the will of the Namibian people who, after long years of struggle and perseverance, have attained

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

their independence. This is a victory for international legitimacy, as represented by the United Nations. We are confident that independent Namibia will assume its role in supporting the just causes in the world.

Similarly, I would like to express, on behalf of my country, Bahrain, our sincere congratulations to the Principality of Liechtenstein on the occasion of its accession to the Organization. We are sure that it will contribute to the achievement of the objectives and purposes of the United Nations.

The forty-fifth session is convening as the United Nations is witnessing an important period in its history, one of transition from the cold war era to an era of détente as a result of a novel and innovative vision that seeks to carry ideological differences and rivalry of interests to a new level of international co-operation that is based on an enlightened dialogue and a clear understanding of world issues.

This détente undoubtedly represents the return of relations between nations to their correct course, guided by a political philosophy rooted in adherence to the principles and objectives of the Charter, which the founders of the United Nations had long hoped would constitute the approach to peace in the world and the framework for the security of all mankind.

In the midst of their positive orientation towards a new world order came the Iraqi invasion of the territory of the sister State of Kuwait on 2 August to test the mettle of international détente and underscore the fact that, unless there is a concerted international effort to establish an effective security system in the world, this new philosophy will collapse.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

We agree with the statement in the Secretary-General's report that the world is in dire need of "a coherent strategy of peace" and that it is important to emphasize the comprehensive nature of the concept of peace, as laid down in the Charter. However, we do not view peace as a necessity imposed by events and developments or dictated by pressures and influences, but as an approach to the formulation of relations between peoples on a basis of equality and justice so as to preserve the legitimate rights and interests of all parties, guarantee their stability and safety and permit them to direct their energies towards meeting the requirements of construction and rehabilitation. It is also a framework for settling differences and disputes through dialogue and accommodation, an essential requirement of collective life, whether in the past, present or future. Such a peace is a choice that genuinely reflects the aspirations and hopes of our peoples.

The Iraqi invasion of the State of Kuwait, that small country noted for its positive interaction with world issues, has deeply wounded the conscience of humanity and caused a huge fissure in the wall of international security. It has also placed world peace atop an erupting volcano at a time when the world thought it had reached an acceptable degree of consensus on the formulation of a common regional and international policy, capable of comprehending and absorbing the détente movement in our new world, as well as a reasonable measure of agreement on the importance of resolving hot regional conflicts through dialogue and by peaceful means.

The world was surprised when Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait, that peaceful and pacifist country which was bound to Iraq by the strongest and deepest of fraternal relations and shared with it membership in the League of Arab States, the United Nations and several other regional and international organizations, only to be repaid for its noble postures by the victimization and dispersion of its people.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

The Iraqi invasion has caused a severe trauma to Kuwaiti society and total upheaval in Kuwait's public life. Business activity has ground to a halt, institutions have been demolished, properties have been seized and all financial and economic activities completely paralysed. Hundreds of thousands of Kuwaitis and aliens residing in Kuwait fled the country in fear and dread of the pilfering, looting, sabotage, assaults, killings and destruction perpetrated by the Iraqi forces, not to mention the raiding of homes and the shooting of innocent unarmed civilians who refused to collaborate with the occupation forces. This amounted to an attempt to destroy the very foundations of the State, obliterate the identity of its people and erase it from the map of the world for all time. In this respect, we cannot overlook the plight of the thousands of foreign nationals displaced from the State of Kuwait and the detention of some of them as hostages to serve as human shields without regard to moral principles or human values.

This crisis has placed the United Nations at the forefront of events. The Security Council was quick to act, adopting eight resolutions so far, all demanding the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwaiti territory and the restoration of the legitimate Government of the country. The common will of the States of the world was reflected in resolution 665 (1990), which expressed the insistence of the international community that economic sanctions be imposed against Iraq by every possible means.

Bahrain's position, vis-à-vis the Iraqi aggression is clear and unequivocal. Iraqi forces must withdraw unconditionally from Kuwaiti territory, no recognition of Iraq's annexation of Kuwait nor of any consequences thereof, but insistence on the restitution of the legitimate Government that had existed in Kuwait prior to the invasion as represented in the person of His Highness Shaikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Emir of the State of Kuwait; the rights of

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(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

civilians in the Iraqi-occupied territory of Kuwait should be respected, their safety guaranteed and their lives and properties protected, in accordance with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, in addition to the demand that the Iraqi authorities refrain from effecting any changes in the demographic composition within Kuwait which would constitute a violation of international law; affirming the legal right of all injured Kuwaitis and others to receive fair indemnity for damages and losses incurred by them; and considering as null and void Iraq's decision on the closure of diplomatic and consular missions accredited to the State of Kuwait. We call upon Iraq to comply with the resolutions of the Security Council and to respond to the international community's unanimity with a view to preserving international legitimacy.

The acute crisis created by Iraq has caused a basic disruption in the regional security system of the Gulf, constituting as it has a blatant breach of the principles of the United Nations, of all international norms and covenants and of the provisions of international law and fundamental human rights.

Since its inception, the Gulf Co-operation Council has worked consistently on co-ordinating political and economic ties between its members, developing the indigenous capabilities of their peoples and proceeding forward on the road to laying the foundations of co-operation between its member States, with the aim of developing positive attitudes on achieving security and stability in the Gulf, in co-operation with all States in the region through understanding and dialogue, as well as respect for the principles of good-neighbourliness, territorial sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. However, the security challenges posed by the Iraqi invasion make it imperative for us to reconsider the question of the security of the Gulf in a new context, that would be compatible with the requirements of the era of détente and ensure the protection of

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

regional and international interests. In this respect, I would like to refer in particular to the need to adopt the necessary international measures in times of crises, especially those prescribed in Chapter VII of the Charter, which call for the application of measures agreed to by the members of the Security Council in cases where there exists a threat to or breach of peace or act of aggression against any State Member of the United Nations. The widespread condemnation of the Iraqi invasion of the sister State of Kuwait has proved that it is possible to apply the system of collective security in the post-cold war era, especially after the Soviet Union and the United States had agreed on the way to deal with regional crises. The Security Council has been able to adopt the wise and apt resolution 660 (1990) in which it demands the immediate and unconditional withdrawal by Iraq of all its forces to the positions in which they were deployed on 1 August 1990. Faced with the failure of the Iraqi authorities to comply with that resolution, the Council did not hesitate to adopt its historic resolution 661 (1990) imposing economic sanctions against Iraq and, more recently, resolution 670 (1990) strengthening the blockade imposed against Iraq.

The international community, which had suffered immensely from the effects of the cold war and its negative effects over the past four decades, cannot permit any contravention of international legitimacy in this phase of true détente which the world is experiencing now. Iraq's occupation of the State of Kuwait was the first serious test of the new international order, since it represented a departure from the general atmosphere of détente which stresses dialogue and understanding in resolving international problems and emphasizes a balance of interests rather than a balance of power. The States that had already begun reorganizing their affairs within the framework of this new international order were not ready to allow a

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

regional Power to depart from these rules. This explains, perhaps, why international unanimity against Iraq crystallized so quickly and why the Security Council adopted such crucial resolutions to confront the crisis and its serious ramifications.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

There can be no doubt that the 9 September 1990 Helsinki summit between Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev was an important milestone on the road towards the laying of the foundations of a new international order that is based on respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law. We fully support the joint statement of the Helsinki summit, which reiterated several fundamental principles, among the most important of which is that no peaceful international order is possible if larger States are permitted to devour their smaller neighbours.

It may be appropriate now to pause to consider a few points of special importance to my delegation by virtue of their relevance to regional security and their impact on our vision of the future of the region in which we live and the Arab nation to which we belong.

The first point relates to our absolute rejection - which I reiterate - of the logic of occupation by force of the territory of others or the invasion of one State by another and its annexation under threat of the use of arms. The starting point to deal with this subject in all its dangerous and complicated dimensions is that we must not hesitate to tackle it. Nor must we be satisfied with voicing protests that are devoid of content and do not produce results. For if we do so we shall be contributing, intentionally or unintentionally, to the aggravation of the damage to international legitimacy. Our clear aim should be to prevent developments from jeopardizing peace and security in the Gulf region and to insist on the implementation of Security Council resolutions in letter and in spirit.

The second point relates to the importance of emphasizing the right of any State to adopt all legitimate measures of self-defence and safeguard the security and safety of its citizens, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, which deals with legitimate self-defence. In that context, we laud the alacrity of

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

the sister and friendly States - totalling more than 22 from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America - in responding to the invitation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to join it in the defence of its territory, and in responding to the behests of international legitimacy with determination and firmness in order to deter aggression and preserve peace in the Gulf region.

The third point relates to our conviction that the Middle East must be made a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, namely nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The achievemnt of that goal will be a step forward towards safeguarding the future of peace-loving States in the region and removing the spectre of the nuclear and chemical threat under which they live. This is a requirement that stems from the legitimate right of those States to self-defence and to deter any attempt to violate their inalienable rights. It is also in keeping with the concepts, values and trends of our age.

There are several political, economic and social issues on which our attention and that of the world is focused. Foremost among them is the question of the Palestinian people and the various kinds of suppression and terror used by the Israeli occupying authorities against the intifadah. It is therefore imperative that a just and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine be achieved through the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 43/176 of 15 December 1988 and 44/42 of 6 December 1989, with the participation of all the parties concerned and of the permanent members of the Security Council, in order to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and to the establishment of a State of their own on their

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(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

national soil. The conference should also stress the need for the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the occupied Arab territories, including southern Lebanon and the Syrian Golan Heights.

As regards Lebanon, it was gratifying to see the parties concerned in this crisis agreeing to the Taif accord which represents a basic foundation for national unity. We welcome the Lebanese Parliament's ratification in August 1990 of that important instrument, and hail it as a historic step towards the implementation of all phases of the accord, the restoration of Lebanon's unity and the preservation of its independence and sovereignty.

The world is united in stating that racial discrimination and the policy of apartheid are a blatant violation of human principles and the dignity of mankind, and contravene the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On 14 December 1989, the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session, adopted by consensus the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, which sets out principles that can be acceptable points for the elimination of apartheid in South Africa.

As regards the Cyprus problem, we hope progress can be achieved in the dialogue between the two Cypriot communities under the auspices of the Secretary-General, so that the unity of Cyprus can be restored.

The Korean question also occupies the attention of the international community today owing to positive developments on the political level in the two Koreas. We reiterate our support for all efforts aimed at reuniting the two parts of the Korean peninsula and at realizing the hopes of the Korean people through the accomplishment of national unity.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

The political changes in the world today, notably the policy of détente between the two super-Powers and the tendency of the majority of States to abide by the provisions of the Charter and the principles of international law have not been reflected in an improvement of the deteriorating economic situation of the developing countries, which continue to suffer from the excruciating economic crises that are the legacy of the 1970s and 1980s. Perhaps the debt crisis, the negative effects of which the world began to suffer in the early 1980s, is the most striking of the problems that developing countries have been facing of late, since it has led to economic recession and in the inability of a number of those countries to meet their financial obligations. There are indications that the adverse effects of the deteriorating economic conditions in the developing countries will not be limited to those countries, but will spill over and affect the developed countries as well.

It is our sincere hope that international co-operation can be strengthened in order to settle this indebtedness within the framework of the United Nations. We hope too that the obligations set out in the economic declaration of the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to international economic co-operation, in particular to the revitalization of economic growth and development of the developing countries, will be duly honoured and implemented in isolation from political differences. We also hope for success in efforts to secure the adoption of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Bahrain)

Since the founding of the United Nations, this Hall has witnessed numerous debates and discussions on the problems, crises and dangers that beset the world. Those debates and discussions were held in the hope of securing the support of the United Nations in resolving them, and containing their causes. Our viewpoints on those issues sometimes converged but, more often than not, diverged.

The reason we are now hopeful and optimistic is that the current session of the General Assembly is convened at a time when the world is experiencing the easing of tension with regard to a number of international issues and an important transformation in the functions of the United Nations, the trustworthy custodian of the world's interests and a major partner in facing up to the dangers that confront it. This puts our Organization back on track, for the role prescribed for it by its Charter is that of a centre for co-ordinating the actions of nations and a vehicle for adopting the important decisions required for the preservation of international legitimacy and respect for the provisions of international law and the principles of justice, with all that this requires in clarity of thought and flexibility of action.

We look forward to the day when this living edifice for peace which the authors of the Charter envisioned is completed, so that it may proceed with sure steps towards achieving affluence and prosperity for all the peoples of the world.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker for this evening.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. ROCHEREAU DE LA SABLIERE (interpretation from French): In her statement today, the representative of New Zealand challenged my country over underground nuclear testing which France has been conducting in its territory in Polynesia. My delegation once again recalls that French underground nuclear testing - I repeat "underground" - does not in the least harm the interests of the States of the region, the health of those who live there or the environment, as several international verification missions have been able to see. The missions' studies are available to all.

I would add that when resolution 44/119 F was adopted the French delegation reminded the Assembly of the reasons why my country was not able to subscribe to the Protocol to the Treaty of Rarotonga, and our position has not charged.

Ms. WILLBERG (New Zealand): The statement made by the representative of France does not, in our view, address the points made by the New Zealand Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control in her statement in the general debate this morning.

The opposition of New Zealand and other South Pacific Forum States to nuclear testing has been voiced consistently in this and other forums for decades. We cannot accept that a region that is committed to nuclear-free principles should be used as a test site for the development of nuclear-weapons technology. We have, of course, been told by France that the testing is safe. If the nuclear-testing programme is as safe as France claims, why are the tests conducted in our part of the world and not in metropolitan France?

We acknowledge that France has made an effort to demonstrate that its testing programme is conducted to a high standard of safety. But we need more than that to convince us. Our view remains that the programme is unacceptable, both in regard to keeping the South Pacific region nuclear-weapon-free and in regard to the potential threat it poses to the Pacific environment.

(Ms. Willberg, New Zealand)

For those reasons, we continue to call on France to cease its testing programme in our region.

The PRESIDENT: The Observer of Palestine has asked to be allowed to reply to the statement made by one of the speakers in the general debate. I intend to call on him to make a statement in reply on the basis of resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and resolution 43/177, of 15 December 1988, taking duly into account the ruling made by the President of the thirty-first session and the precedents established under similar circumstances during subsequent sessions of the Assembly.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine): It is ironic that the Foreign Minister of Israel considered that

"A wondrous vision thus unfolds before our eyes - masses of people reinstating their national identity and rejoining their brethren in their homeland".

We all recall that he was referring to what he called

"the unbolting of the gates of the Soviet Union before its Jews"

and the mass transfer of what he said were

"our people to their national home ..."

I say that it is ironic, because we all know that Israel persists in bolting the gates of the occupied homes and property in Palestine and prevents the Palestinians not only from rejoining their brethren in their homeland, but from returning to their own homes, returning to their own property, returning to their own fields to plough them again, and returning to their own trees, which they themselves planted.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine)

That is not only a violation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians; it is a violation of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Israel has failed to comply with the basic condition for its acceptance as a member of this Organization. I am referring to the issue of its compliance - or, rather, non-compliance - with resolution 194 (III). Israel persists in its policies and practices of spiriting across and transfering all the Palestinians beyond the river into the desert and into the wilderness.

Is it really necessary to recall the overwhelming support for the call to convene the International Peace Conference on the Middle East? I refer to resolution 44/42, adopted last year with 151 Member States in favour. Israel and two others voted against it.

The General Assembly has already endorsed a peace plan specifying the guidelines for the achievement of peace. It has identified the participants and the hopes for peace in the Middle East through a just solution of the Palestine question. In no uncertain terms, the General Assembly has manifested its support for the Palestinian peace initiative adopted by the Palestine National Council, which was proclaimed in the General Assembly in December 1988 by President Yasser Arafat.

The General Assembly has prescribed the process for peace in the Middle East. But it is Israel that keeps repeating its farcical plan of May 1989, which is in fact a negative response to, or, rather, a rejection of, the peace call by the General Assembly.

One has only to recall that when the Government of the United States of America elaborated on the Israeli plan it was Israel again that rejected the Baker plan.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine)

All the Palestinians, whether those under Israeli repression and military rule or those in their places of dispersion, unanimously support the Palestine Liberation Organization as their sole and legitimate representative. Should anybody really have any doubt, I would request the Security Council to demand the holding of a referendum in the occupied territory, under the Security Council's auspices, a referendum that would not be held in the shadow of the Israeli occupation and under its boots and bayonets.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine)

We wish to recall what President Bush said this morning and we hope it will materialize. He proposed that the United Nations appoint a special co-ordinator for electoral assistance. Why not start now and have the United Nations, specifically the Security Council, run and supervise those elections in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel. This is a challenge - a challenge to the peace-loving peoples, a challenge by the heroic children of the intifadah. Will the United Nations prevail and ensure the peace process or will Israel be permitted to pursue its brutality against the Palestinian people and thus obstruct the peace process and pose a permanent threat to international peace and security?

And, finally, allow me to repeat what was stated this morning:

"The Lord will give strength unto his people. The Lord will bless his people with peace."

Yes, we here are all people of the Lord because God is not selective and He does not discriminate.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.